'Multi-Agency Approaches To Domestic Violence In A County In Northern England.'

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Contents.

Abstract viii

List of Figures and Tables ix

Glossary x

Acknowledgements xi

Chapter One: Introduction **2**

Terms and Terminology 2

Approaches to Domestic Violence 4

The Research 9

Chapter Two: The Literature **14**

Introduction 14

Domestic Violence 16

Repeat Victimization 16

The Abuse 18

Possible Extent 21

The Battered Women's Movement and the Development of Refuges 24

Responses from Other Service Providers 29

Policing – Literature and Policy 34

Responses from Service Providers Revisited 45

Black and Ethnic Minority Women 45

Outreach and Advocacy 46

Helplines, Community-Based Services and Drop-In-Centres 47

Rape Crisis 47

Victim Support 48

The Home Office Crime Prevention Agenda – Promoting Partnership 50

Policy Discourse 1980 and Onwards 50

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 52

The Multi-Agency Approach at Practical Level 54

'Crime, Community and the Inter-Agency Dimension' 54

Victim Support and Crime Prevention in an Inner-City Setting 63

The Inter-Agency Crime Prevention Research Project 70

Domestic Violence and Multi-Agency Approaches 80
The Policy 80
The Practice 83
The Research Questions, Topics and Problematics 100
Attendance 100
Structures 100
Outcomes 101
Power 102
Conclusion 103

Chapter Three: The Research Areas **106**
Pittplace 106
General Information 106
Domestic Violence in Pittplace 107
The Multi-Agency Approach to Domestic Violence in Pittplace 110
The Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group 110
The Pittplace Domestic Violence Multi-Agency Forum 110
Steelsite 111
General Information 111
Domestic Violence in Steelsite 112
The Multi-Agency Approach to Domestic Violence in Steelsite 115
The Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum 115
Belleton 119
Millerton 120
Hillshire – The Multi-Agency Approach to Domestic Violence 120

Chapter Four: Methods **124**
The Research Methods 125
Participant Observation 126
Qualitative Interviewing 133
The Semi-Structured Interview 134
How Many Interviews? 140
Sampling Points 141
The Face-To-Face Versus the Telephone Interview 145
Conducting The Interviews 146
Tape Recording and Transcription 147
Focus Group Interviews 148

Ethical Issues 149

Chapter Five: The Results **152**
Introduction 152
The Initiatives 153
Aims and Objectives 153
The Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group 153
The Pittplace Domestic Violence Multi-Agency Forum 155
The Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum 155
Structural Differences 156
Attendance in the Initiatives Researched 159
Discussion in the Initiatives Researched 181
The Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group 181
PDVTG Objectives 182
Funding 182
Pittplace's Crime and Disorder Strategy 183
AOB Issues 184
Policy 187
Attendees 187
Service Provision 187
The Pittplace Domestic Violence Multi-Agency Forum 190
Domestic Violence 190
Domestic Violence Service Provision 191
Funding 192
Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Approaches 193
The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 194
Duplication in Pittplace 196
The Steelsite Domestic Violence Full Forum 198
The Multi-Agency Strategy on Domestic Abuse 199
The NLCB Voluntary Sector Development Project 199
Joint Forum/Steelsite University Research 200
Forum Sub-Groups 200
Funding Issues 200
'Information Sharing' and AOB Issues 201
Presentations 202
Who Talked? 205
A Final Word about Discussion in the SDVF 210

Other Points About Discussion in the Initiatives Researched 212
Disagreement 212
Before, After and Outside Meetings 214
The Initiatives' Outputs 216
The Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group 216
The Pittplace Domestic Violence Multi-Agency Forum 219
The Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum 220
The Multi-Agency Strategy On Domestic Abuse 220
The Forum's CRP Bid 223
Attendees' Service Provision 226
A Final Word About Service Provision 230
Conclusion 237

Chapter Six: Themed Discussion **242**
Introduction 242
Attendance in Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Approaches 243
Specialist Attendees 243
No Abused Women As Attendees 244
Multi-Agency Specialists 245
Individual Concern 246
Bad Attendance 247
Unimportance, Uncertainty and Certainty 248
Certainty 250
Different Attendance 250
Numerous Attendance 252
Multi-Agency Structures 255
Informality 256
Contacts Outside Meetings 257
Multi-Agency Aims, Objectives, Outputs and Outcomes 258
Aims and Objectives 259
Service Provision on Domestic Violence 259
Encouraging Liaison 259
Prevention of Domestic Violence 261
Outputs 262
Guidance on Service Provision 263
Undertaking Direct Service Provision 264
Getting Funding 266

Outcomes 267
Consensus Building 268
'Supporting' Direct Service Providers 269
Networking and Interaction 272
Power 274
Power – What It Is 275
Access to Women 275
Power as Access to Women in Pittplace and Steelsite Initiatives 278
Information, Knowledge and Expertise 280
Domestic Violence 281
Funding 281
Multi-Agency Approaches 281
What The Consequences Of Being 'Powerful' Are 283
Postscript 285
Conclusion 287

Chapter Seven: Conclusion **291**

Bibliography **305**

Appendices **322**

Appendix A: The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Sections Five and Six 322

Appendix B: Crime and Disorder Audits and Strategies, the Bradford Experience 325

Appendix C: The Pittplace Community Safety Partnership Structure 327

Appendix D: The number of women and children using the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge between 1978 and 1998 328

Appendix E: The Safer Steelsite Steering Group Structure 329

Appendix F: Groups Encountering Domestic Violence as Part of Their General Service Provision in Steelsite 330

Appendix G: The 'Activities' of the Pittplace Community Safety Partnership Domestic Violence Topic Group 331

Appendix H: Tables 5B, C and D 333

Appendix I: Table 5F 337

Appendix J: Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group Discussion On The Training Objective 338

Appendix K: Jumbled Discussion In The April 2000 Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum 339

Appendix L: Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum Agendas 341

Appendix M: Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum Full Forum Discussion – July 2000 346

Abstract.

The thesis documents research on multi-agency approaches to domestic violence. The research has been conducted in a county in Northern England – fictitiously named Hillshire – and has focused on two areas in that county – fictitiously named Pittplace and Steelsite. The researcher has been particularly interested in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite and has sought to examine both what these initiatives are and what they mean. The research has had two main aims. First, to increase our *understandings* about partnership approaches, especially those focused on domestic violence, and, secondly, to examine whether the increasingly de rigueur collective action on domestic violence has brought change for women and their children. Arguing that research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite raise issues that lead to the conclusion that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives are not making women and children safer and that partnership approaches have, in truth, made little difference – that there has been 'radical change but no change at all' – is the researcher's main aim in this thesis.

The thesis develops through seven Chapters to the main conclusion on multi-agency domestic violence approaches – that there is a disassociation between multi-agency *initiatives* on domestic violence and *service provision* on domestic violence. Early Chapters highlight that initial responses to domestic violence were grounded in women's liberation but that more recent developments have occurred in the Home Office's crime prevention agenda and that, although the organizations responding to women and children are those that have their roots in the women's movement, developments on domestic violence are increasingly happening in Home Office crime prevention circles. The move to the multi-agency approach in such circles is also documented here. Early Chapters also highlight certain themes – attendance, structures, outcomes and power – that provide the basis around which the questions, topics and problematics for the empirical research are organized.

Later Chapters set out the main findings in Pittplace and Steelsite. Here, discussion focuses on the main issues raised in the empirical research that construct the researcher's main argument. These issues are again discussed under the four main themes of attendance, structures, outcomes and power. Each issue discussed under these themes is found to suggest either a disconnection in *practice*, a *perceived* disconnection or a *caused* disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence. How these disconnections lead to the main conclusion that there is a disassociation between multi-agency *initiatives* on domestic violence and *service provision* on domestic violence and that such initiatives are not making women and children safer is examined as the thesis draws to a close.

List of Figures and Tables.

Figures.

3A Figure showing tables detailing features of specialist domestic violence accommodation services in Steelsite. **114**

3B Figure showing tables detailing features of specialist domestic violence support services in Steelsite. **115**

5A Figure showing an illustration SDVF agenda. **199**

6A Figure showing the transition in discourse on domestic violence service provision. **280**

7A A figure showing the disassociation between multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and domestic violence service provision. **296**

Tables.

3A A table estimating the possible extent of domestic violence in Pittplace, taking the percentages of last year or life-time experiences of domestic violence suggested in the research set out in Chapter Two and applying them to the number of adult females in Pittplace. **108**

3B A table estimating the possible extent of domestic violence in Steelsite, taking the percentages of last year or life-time experiences of domestic violence suggested in the research set out in chapter two and applying them to the number of adult females in Steelsite. **112**

4A A table showing numbers of face to face and telephone interviews conducted in the Hillshire research. **141**

4B A table showing interviewees' agencies, organizations and departments of agencies, gender and their hierarchical position in their agency or organization. **143**

5A A table showing those agencies and organizations attending the Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group, the Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum and the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum in the research period. **160**

5B A table showing the pattern of agency, organization and individual attendance on the Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group. **Appendix H**

5C A table showing the pattern of agency, organization and individual attendance on the Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum. **Appendix H**

5D A table showing the pattern of agency, organization and individual attendance on the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum. **Appendix H**

5E A table showing those agencies and organizations attending the PDVTG and PMADVF on at least one occasion over the research observation period. **179**

5F A Table Showing Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group Agendas. **Appendix I**

Glossary

A&E	Accident and Emergency
AAMVS	Action Against Men's Violence Steelsite
ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AOB	Any Other Business
BCS	British Crime Survey
CHS	Community Health Steelsite
CIP	Community Initiatives Programme
COSAC	Carers of Sexually Abused Children
CPN	Community Psychiatric Nurse
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CPU	Crime Prevention Unit
CRP	Crime Prevention Programme
DASH	Domestic Abuse Women Seeking Help
DAT	Drugs Action Team
DETR	Department of Environment, Transport & Regions
DVIP	Domestic Violence Intervention Project
DVM	Domestic Violence Matters
DVO	Domestic Violence Officer
FCS	Family Consultants Service
GP	General Practitioner
HAZ	Health Action Zone
HFAB	Hillshire Funding Advice Bureau
HFDVF	Hammersmith and Fulham Domestic Violence Forum
LGMB	Local Government Management Board
LIAP	Leeds Inter-Agency Project
NACRO	National Association for the Care & Resettlement of Offenders
NAVSS	National Association of Victim Support Schemes
NHS	National Health Service
NLCB	National Lotteries Charities Board
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act
PADS	Performing Arts Development Service
PCG	Primary Care Group
PCPP	Pittplace Crime Prevention Partnership
PCSP	Pittplace Community Safety Partnership
PDVTG	Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group
PMADVF	Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum
PMBC	Pittplace Metropolitan Borough Council
PPB	Partnership Policy Board
PRC	Policing and Reducing Crime Unit
PRG	Police Research Group
SCC	Steelsite City Council
SDVF	Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum
SOVA	Society of Voluntary Associates
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
SRSACS	Steelsite Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Service
SSSG	Safer Steelsite Steering Group
VPP	Violence Prevention Programme
WAFE	Women's Aid Federation of England
WAVN	Women Against Violence Network
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

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"...He started to beat me up, and dragged me downstairs by the hair. He knocked me flying across the kitchen..." (Fiona).

"...Eventually he managed to boot the door down. He got the kids up, sat them on the landing in a line, even little baby, and he raped me in front of the kids. Made them stay there..." (Bev).

"...It's controlled my life ever since. The bruises heal but the mental and sexual abuse doesn't. I still suffer from a lot of things. I'll always be fighting the bulimia, that will always stay with me..." (Mandy).

"...My son, aged nine, is stood there with his baseball bat, and he's crying his little heart out. And he's saying 'Please dad, don't make me do this, please dad, I don't want to hurt you, please dad, you're not hitting my mummy again'. And he stood there between us with the baseball bat until the police arrived..." (Liz)[1].

[1] These quotes from women are taken from the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum's Multi-Agency Strategy on Domestic Abuse (2000). This Strategy takes them from the Beta Domestic Violence Project's Action Research Project.

Chapter One – Introduction.

Domestic violence is violence, abuse and harassment that occurs in a personal or family relationship. Domestic violence can be physical assaults; sexual assaults; sexual humiliation; forced sexual intercourse; intimidation; emotional abuse; economic hardship; and sometimes attempted murder and murder. Domestic violence is not monolithic – numerous behaviours characterize it. Unsurprisingly, then, there are numerous expressions used to describe it – domestic violence; domestic abuse; family violence; spouse abuse. Likewise, numerous expressions are used to describe those experiencing it – victims of domestic violence; victims of domestic abuse; battered women; battered wives; survivors.

1. Terms and Terminology.

Throughout this thesis 'domestic violence' and 'victims of domestic violence' are the expressions used. Why? Using an expression that centres on 'violence' does not reflect, as an expression such as 'abuse' might, the numerous other behaviours that characterize the phenomenon. This is problematic in meaning that the picture the expression 'domestic violence' paints is not as lucid as it might be. Further, focusing on *violence*, rather than the other characteristic behaviours, might encourage both an impression that, unless bones are broken, domestic violence is not happening and, more, that these other behaviours are less important. Yet, focusing on violence emphasizes that the behaviour being described here is not mere disagreements or arguments. Rather, on most occasions the behaviour that is being described *is* violence. Though 'violence' necessarily connotes abusive behaviour, 'abuse' does not necessarily connote violent behaviour. The expression 'domestic violence' is used here to emphasize the violence of much of the behaviour that is being described.

Likewise, using an expression such as 'domestic' does not reflect who is doing the abusing and who is being abused – who is using violence and who is being violated. Commonly, those doing the abusing are ***men*** and those being abused are ***women***. Seemingly, it is increasingly "...controversial..." (Stanko 1998) to claim that ***men*** perpetrate domestic violence on women and the children of those women. The 1996 British Crime Survey (BCS) found that the same numbers of women and men reported domestic violence in the past year – 4.2%. The BCS findings might be used to argue not that it is controversial, but that it is ***mistaken*** to claim men perpetrate domestic violence on women and children. Yet, such usage rather assumes that the BCS paints a

precise picture of domestic violence as regards prevalence and incidence – there are numerous reasons that mean it does not[2].

Anyway, there remain serious questions around the comparability of women and men's *experiences* of domestic violence. In the 1996 BSC, women reported higher levels of repeat victimization over the last year – 12.1% of women compared with 5.0% of men had been assaulted three or more times and were termed 'chronic female victims'. Women were also twice as likely as men to have been injured by a partner in the last year (2.2% compared with 1.1%) and women were three times as likely to have suffered frightening threats (3.8% compared with 1.5%). Women were also more likely to report feeling 'very upset' on the last occasion they were assaulted and found assaults considerably more frightening. The effects were also longer lasting for women than men – 38% of chronic female victims said they were still upset at the time of the BCS survey, compared with 11% of chronic male victims. Finally, almost no men defined their experience as a crime but 39% of chronic female victims defined their most recent experience as a crime.

Hague and Malos assume a strong position on the controversy or otherwise surrounding the claim that men perpetrate domestic violence on women. These researchers say:

> "...one has to ask what this fuss about women's supposed violence towards men is all about. Is it because in a society still controlled by men there is an almost automatic collusion to minimize the violence and damage and injury that men do to women? Is it about blaming and victimizing still further women who are already on the receiving end of violent abuse and degradation?..." (Hague and Malos 1998: 16).

This is a most difficult issue. Further examination is beyond the scope of the present discussion. Suffice to say, though, the present researcher's conceptualization is that domestic violence victimization is focused on women and their children.

The researcher concedes, then, that using the expression 'domestic violence' does not reflect who is doing the abusing and who is being abused as an expression such as 'violence against women by known men' might. Further, the expression 'domestic' might be used to suggest that 'domestic' violence is less serious than other violence – 'it's just a domestic'. Yet, 'domestic' is the expression used here, not to encourage the impression that the phenomenon matters *less* but that it matters *more*. Domestic violence matters more because "...the place to which most people run 'to get away from fear and violence' can be, for women, the context of 'the most frightening violence of all'..." (Smith 1989, paraphrasing Wilson 1983).

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[2] As mentioned in Chapter Two. For a fuller discussion see Walby and Myhill (2000).

Sometimes, domestic violence does not just occur in the home or in 'intimate' relationships – it can also occur fathers on daughters; sons on mother; brothers on sisters. Women can be abused by men with whom they have sexual relationships but no joint living arrangements or by male friends and acquaintances. Much abuse occurs even as women *leave* their homes and their abuser. Women no longer living in their homes continue to face enormous dangers. Men often go after women who have left and most men who murder their women partners do so once the woman has left. Again, then, the expression 'domestic violence' does not reflect these nuances as an expression such as 'violence against women by known men' might. Nonetheless, throughout the thesis domestic violence is used because it is the expression most commonly used in policy circles and, further, it is the expression used in the research literature.

Why is the expression 'victims of domestic violence' used? The expression 'survivors of domestic violence' is favoured in some circles as it is seen to symbolize women's courage in living through men's abuse and violence. 'Victim' might encourage the impression that women are diminished and belittled though being abused. Yet, domestic violence is just as much victimization as other violence is. Most violence, abuse and harassment that happen in a domestic setting might be criminalized were it to happen in a non-domestic setting. Sometimes, the violence that occurs in domestic violence is the most heinous crime – murder. One out of two women murdered each year is murdered by her current or former partner (Home Office, Criminal Statistics 1997) and around two women each week die at the hands of their male partner or former partner in England and Wales (Home Office, Criminal Statistics 1999). So, notwithstanding the discussions that surround these expressions, throughout this thesis, 'domestic violence' and 'victims of domestic violence' are the expressions used.

2. Approaches to Domestic Violence.

Domestic violence has traditionally been hidden from the (mainstream) agenda of social problems. Yet, it is, under no circumstances, a recent phenomenon. Lorna Smith (1989), in her comprehensive Home Office discussion, claims that one of the earliest reported English cases was that of Margaret Neffeld of York who, in 1395, brought witnesses before an ecclesiastical court to testify that her husband had attacked her, wielding a dagger and wounding her and breaking her bones. Seemingly, the court held that the case for a judicial separation[3] had not been made out and the woman was forced to continue living with her husband. The Dobashes (1981) maintain that for centuries

[3] Or the latter day equivalent of.

husbands have used systematic and serious violence to punish, dominate and control their wives as a matter of prerogative.

Indeed, husbands had rights over their wives that were clearly articulated in English common law, including the right to correct and chastise. Smith quotes Hecker (1910) to claim that "...a husband was allowed to 'give his wife a severe beating with whips and clubs' for some 'offences'..." (1989: 3). Husbands' right to reasonable chastisement persisted until 1891 (Freeman 1979). Freeman (1979), though, records that as recently as 1976, a Scottish judge argued that 'reasonable chastisement should be the duty of every husband if his wife misbehaves' since 'it is a well-known fact that you can strike your wife's bottom if you wish, but you must not strike her on her face'. Husbands' right to rape their wives persisted until 1991. The common law until 1991 had held that a husband could not be convicted of raping his wife. This 'marital rape exemption' had been grounded in the notion that, on marriage, a wife had given irrevocable consent to sexual intercourse (see Naffine 1994; Ashworth 1998; Lees 2001). The common law rule was challenged in, and abolished by, the House of Lords in *R V R*[4]. Subsequently, there have been several convictions of husbands[5].

Towards the end of the 19th Century, a law reform movement gathered momentum. Frances Power Cobbe (1878) in 'Wife Torture in England' encouraged that separation orders be issued by magistrates' courts. Her encouragement was realized in the same year, as the Matrimonial Causes Act 1878 was passed. This Act gave magistrates the power to issue a separation order with maintenance to a wife whose husband had been convicted of aggravated assault if her future safety was threatened. The safety proviso was removed in 1895 (see Smith 1989). Domestic violence was, though, hidden from the agenda of social problems until the 1970s when "...a new social movement emerged that would not only directly and unequivocally assist battered women but would also, through its policies, procedures, and actions, directly and indirectly challenge patriarchal ideas and practices..." (Dobash and Dobash 1979: 223) – the battered women's movement.

The battered women's movement began in Britain in 1972 when feminists established a women's centre in Chiswick, London – 'the Goldhawk Road Women's Liberation Movement Centre'. When a woman escaping her abusive husband was allowed to use the centre as emergency, temporary accommodation, the Goldhawk Road Women's

[4] [1992] I AC 599.
[5] See *W* [1992] Crim LR 905, *T* (1994) 15 Cr App R (S) 318.

Liberation Movement Centre became a 24 hour refuge for battered women. Soon a national network appeared, through which emerging and developing women's groups could develop a co-ordinated effort to publicize and highlight the problem. This was the National Women's Aid Federation, established during 1974 and 1975. The battered women's movement, alongside a burgeoning women's liberation movement, ensured that domestic violence became an increasingly visible social problem. This increasing visibility was influential in the establishment in 1975 of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Violence in Marriage. As per the Dobashes:

> "...it was a major achievement for the [battered women's] movement that the government had responded to activists' pressure by setting up a Parliamentary Select Committee to take evidence and make recommendations for government action..." (1992: 112)[6].

The establishment of the Select Committee was followed by three pieces of legislation – the Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act 1976; the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977; and the Domestic Violence Proceedings and Magistrates Court Act 1978. Again, though, domestic violence was somewhat hidden until the Women's National Commission considered it in their examination of violence against women in 1985. Then, the Home Office entered the frame. Firstly, the Home Office issued to all Chief Officers of Police a Circular, Circular 69/86, encouraging the police to see their main concern in domestic violence as being to ensure the safety of victims and to reduce the risk of further violence. The Home Office commissioned a review of the research literature on domestic violence, intended to inform policy making across government (see Hague et al. 1996). This review (Smith 1989) then heralded another Home Office Circular to the police, Circular 60/90, which encouraged a much more interventionist approach to the policing of domestic violence.

Around the early 1990s things were changing for women in the courts too. Not only was the marital rape exemption abolished but there were positive developments for women who had killed their abusive partners. Beginning in 1992, cases[7] increasingly suggested that women who killed their abusers might use the defence of provocation as a ground for reducing to manslaughter a killing that would otherwise fulfil the definition of murder (see Ashworth 1998; Simester and Sullivan 2000; Smith and Hogan 2000).

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[6] The Select Committee was created in February 1975 and took evidence until July. Over these five months 13 MPs held 23 meetings, including 15 where oral evidence was taken from selected groups of the public, and visited five locations in England, Wales and Scotland. Written and oral evidence was taken from Women's Aid groups, eight government ministers and a wide range of voluntary groups. See Dobash and Dobash (1992).

[7] See Ahluwalia [1992] 4 All ER 889; (1993) 96 Cr App R 133 and Thornton [1992] 1 All ER 306; (1993) 96 Cr App R 112.

The House of Commons Home Affairs Committee Inquiry into Domestic Violence (1993) and the published Government Reply (1993) further entrenched domestic violence on the agenda of social problems. Following the Home Affairs Committee Report, Inter-Departmental Ministerial and Officials Groups on Domestic Violence were founded, leading to the issuing in 1995 of another Circular – 'Inter-Agency Co-Ordination to Tackle Domestic Violence'. Again, the issuing of the Circular coincided with Home Office commissioned research – Sharon Grace's 1995 Home Office Research Study 139, 'Policing Domestic Violence in the 1990s'. These developments were followed in 1996 by the Family Law Act 1996 – Part IV of the Act was accompanied by a Department of Health Circular (DoH 1997). This Circular furthered two 1995 Department of Health publications around domestic violence – 'Child Protection: Messages from Research' and 'Domestic Violence and Social Care'. A 2000 publication builds on these 1995 publications – 'Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual for Health Care Professionals' emphasizes that "...this government is not prepared to tolerate domestic violence..." (DoH 2000: iii).

This is the main message seen in the 1999 Women's Unit publication – 'Living Without Fear: An Integrated Approach to Tackling Violence Against Women':

> "...violence against women is a serious crime which this government is committed to tackling with vigour..." (Women's Unit 1999: Foreword).

This 1999 publication heralded a flurry of activity on domestic violence in government circles. January 1999 witnessed the start of the government's 'Break The Chain' awareness raising campaign on domestic violence, with a leaflet stressing that 'we must not let domestic violence beat us. Together we can break the chain'. Then, in Spring 1999, the Policing and Reducing Crime Unit of the Home Office commissioned a series of literature reviews to examine 'what works in tackling domestic violence?'. Summary reviews were published as Briefing Notes in January 2000. The full review, edited by Julie Taylor-Browne, was published by Whiting and Birch in 2001. As part of the £250 million Crime Reduction Programme, announced by the Home Secretary in the Summer 1998, the Violence against Women initiative was launched in February 2000 – £6.3 million has been allocated to multi-agency partnerships to develop and implement crime reduction around domestic violence and rape and sexual assault by known perpetrators. Another Circular on policing domestic violence, Circular 19/00, was published in 2000. Finally, in 2000, new multi-agency guidance, intended to replace the 1995 Inter-Agency Circular, was published. This new multi-agency guidance represents both the culmination of domestic violence's increasing position on the agenda of social problems

and, as we shall see in Chapter Two, of domestic violence's increasing position on the *multi-agency* landscape. Certainly, the government has three 'overall goals':

- to reduce crimes of violence against women and the fear of violence;
- to help today's children grow up in a society where violence is not part of family life and relationships are built on greater mutual respect; and
- within five years, to see effective multi-agency partnerships operating throughout England and Wales (Women's Unit 1999: 2).

But what does all this mean? Ten years ago, the Dobashes said that:

> "...for the women who have been physically abused in the home by the men with whom they live, the past two decades have seen both radical change and no change at all..." (1992: 1).

There have been further 'radical changes' since the Dobashes' 1992 discussions and domestic violence finds itself increasingly at the heart of government thinking on crime and crime control. But has this made any difference? A decade on might it again be said that there has been 'radical change *but no change at all*'? More specifically, has the increasingly de rigueur collective action, through multi-agency approaches, on domestic violence made any difference? Certainly, it is important that this action is not accepted at face value. Multi-agency approaches must be examined and problematized – what are they; what do they mean; what do they mean for women and their children; do they encourage change for women and children; do they encourage change but lead to no change at all? Further, to what kind of change do they lead? Positioning their third goal on multi-agency partnerships alongside their much more grandiose goals, the government seemingly imagines the changes that multi-agency approaches might bring to be far reaching. But what kind of changes can multi-agency approaches really bring? Can the changes such approaches bring ever be on a par with 'today's children growing up in a society where violence is not part of family life and relationships are built on greater mutual respect'?

Unfortunately, multi-agency approaches to domestic violence remain rather unexamined. Most understanding about how such approaches are seen 'on the ground' comes from a series of publications by Gill Hague and her colleagues in Bristol. Other researchers have examined partnership approaches in domestic violence, but their examination has mostly been part of a broader examination of domestic violence service provision in certain areas. Further, the research that has been conducted has sometimes made *assumptions* about the differences that partnership approaches bring. Certainly, discussing the 'support' that partnership initiatives offer attendees, Nicola Dominy and Lorraine Radford say that this support "...can only be of benefit to women in Surrey..."

(1996: 53). Surely, though, more is needed than mere assumption on whether and how initiatives 'benefit' women?

The present research has sought to examine these issues and aims to problematize thoroughly multi-agency approaches to domestic violence.

3. The Research.

The research has been conducted in a county in Northern England – fictitiously named Hillshire – and has focused on two areas in that county – fictitiously named Pittplace and Steelsite. The researcher has been particularly interested in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite and has sought to examine both what these initiatives are and what they mean. Essentially, the research has had two main aims. The first main aim has been to increase our *understandings* about partnership approaches, especially those focused on domestic violence. The research in Pittplace and Steelsite presents a much needed opportunity to shed some light on partnership approaches in domestic violence. The second main aim has been to examine whether the increasingly de rigueur collective action on domestic violence has made any difference.

To further these aims, the researcher has assumed a participant observer role in initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite and has conducted interviews with initiative attendees to explore just what multi-agency domestic violence initiatives are all about. The researcher has also sought to examine and problematize what multi-agency domestic violence initiatives mean for women and their children – do they encourage change for women and children; do they lead to change; do they encourage change but lead to no change at all? Clearly, the research is rather limited in geographical scope. Nonetheless, it has, the researcher hopes, gone some way to exploring the radical changes seen and to examining the vexed question: 'has the multi-agency approach to domestic violence made any difference?'.

So, examining this question has been a main aim in the research in Pittplace and Steelsite. Arguing that research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite raise issues that lead to the conclusion that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives are not making women and children safer and that partnership approaches have, in truth, made little difference – that there has been 'radical change but no change at all' – is the researcher's main aim in this thesis. The researcher's other aims in this thesis have been to document the move to the multi-agency approach, that was briefly described earlier in this

Introduction, and to increase our understandings about partnership approaches in domestic violence.

So, the next chapter, Chapter Two, documents the move to the multi-agency approach. Chapter Two begins, though, by describing domestic violence, explaining that it is a repeat victimization crime and exploring the abuse involved and, as such, expands on the brief description offered at the beginning of this Introduction. Chapter Two then goes on to discuss the emergence of the battered women's movement and the development of refuges, again, expanding on the brief mention earlier in this Introduction. Further, Chapter Two discusses the emergence of the Women's Aid Federation England (WAFE) and explores its expansion, looking both at the services that WAFE organizations offer and exploring how women perceive these services. Chapter Two then moves to consider the substantial body of research that emerged during the 1970s and early 1980s that examined service provision to women and children experiencing domestic violence. Finally, we move to consider the research literature that, increasingly throughout the 1980s, proliferated on police responses to domestic violence. Chapter Two discussions then move to examine whether the ideas seen in the development of the literature on policing domestic violence have been mirrored at policy level. In this examination, we see that, though police policy has mirrored, and has sometimes been shaped by, ideas in the literature, recent developments have occurred in the Home Office's crime prevention agenda. Before examining this agenda, Chapter Two discussions revisit the responses provided by service providers. There, we see that, although state agencies are increasingly recognizing that domestic violence is an issue and guidance on domestic violence has abounded, most service provision on domestic violence remains concentrated in domestic violence organizations such as Women's Aid.

Chapter Two discussions highlight, then, two important issues. First, that early responses to domestic violence were grounded in women's liberation but that more recent developments have occurred in the Home Office's crime prevention agenda. Secondly, that the organizations responding to women and children are those that have their roots in the women's movement but that developments on domestic violence are increasingly happening in Home Office crime prevention circles. As will be seen in Chapter Two, these issues are important in developing the researcher's argument in the thesis as to whether multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence are making a difference.

Chapter Two then turns to the Home Office's crime prevention agenda and examines how this agenda has become increasingly centred on promoting a partnership approach. So, we examine the 'partnership orthodoxy' in policy discourse on crime prevention from 1982 onwards, seeing the crescendo to the Labour government's Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Chapter Two discussions then move to examine the multi-agency approach to crime prevention at a practical level, exploring some early initiatives discussed in some early research studies about the developing multi-agency approach. Here, commenting on partnership in crime prevention, we identify three main themes around which discussion has revolved: *attendance*, *structures* and *power*. We add another theme, *outcomes*, after our discussions on multi-agency approaches to domestic violence. These discussions also begin by examining policy discourse and then move to cover multi-agency approaches to domestic violence at a practical level, especially the research of Gill Hague and her colleagues. So, at the end of Chapter Two, these four themes – attendance, structures, outcomes and power – provide the basis around which certain research questions are organized. The research questions are set out here in Chapter Two because they derive from the numerous interesting issues raised in the literature on partnership approaches and in our reflections on such literature – the literature and questions are closely associated and so are set out alongside each other.

The points raised in the literature on partnership approaches are used in developing the main research questions because each appears to merit greater examination. Certainly, points raised in the literature on partnership approaches in crime prevention appear to need greater examination vis-à-vis partnership in *domestic violence*. The points raised in the literature on partnership approaches in domestic violence are used in developing the main research questions because a main issue is whether the points raised in Hague and colleagues' research are also raised in the current research. Finally, the points raised in the literature on partnership approaches in both crime prevention and domestic violence are used in developing the main research questions because some such points raise more questions than they answer.

Chapter Two is important for two main reasons. First, it sets out a chronological account of the move to the multi-agency approach. Since documenting this move and the associated changes in responses to domestic violence and thinking about such responses has been a main aim in the thesis, Chapter Two's chronological account assumes an important role in developing the thesis. Chapter Two is important, secondly, because it sets out points and themes raised in the literature on partnership

approaches. The points raised in the literature on partnership approaches and set out in the Chapter function as a resource that is used in developing the research questions.

Chapter Three then describes the geographical areas in which the research questions have been examined – in general terms, each area's socio-economic characteristics; in terms of domestic violence, the possible extent of domestic violence in the research areas and domestic violence service provision in these areas; and then in terms of multi-agency approaches. The researcher sees that Chapter Three is important because it sets out important information that readers need in reading through the remaining Chapters in the thesis.

Chapter Four explains the main methods used in examining the research questions empirically. So, Chapter Four discussions cover the research methods, participant observation and qualitative interviewing, before moving to consider some of the ethical issues pertaining to the current research.

Chapter Five sets out the main research findings, under five headings. First, the initiatives researched are described. Secondly, attendance in the initiatives is examined and 18 main research findings about attendance in these initiatives are set out. Thirdly, discussions in each initiative are covered. Because multi-agency domestic violence initiatives' main focus appears to be their meetings and also because past research has not documented in detail the meeting setting in such initiatives, the discussions held in such meetings in Pittplace and Steelsite are described thoroughly here. The initiatives' main outputs are examined, fourthly. Finally, attendees' service provision is examined. Pittplace and Steelsite interviewees were questioned about their agencies' provision and their individual working – their responses are examined here.

So, Chapter Five sets out the main research findings. Some research findings set out here are not picked up in Chapter Six. This is not because these findings are unimportant but because Chapter Six focuses on the main issues raised in Pittplace and Steelsite around the researcher's main argument. As such, Chapter Five aims to set out the main findings of the *research* in Pittplace and Steelsite, as well as the main findings that lead to the researcher's main *argument* in this thesis. Chapter Five, then, is important for two reasons. First, because it increases our understandings of partnership approaches (a main aim of the research and the thesis) by thoroughly documenting such approaches in Pittplace and Steelsite. Secondly, because it sets out certain research findings that are then picked up in Chapter Six as the researcher's main argument is constructed.

Chapter Six focuses on the main issues raised in Pittplace and Steelsite that construct the researcher's main argument. Examination in Chapter Six focuses on the issues raised under four main themes – attendance, structures, outcomes and power. Each issue discussed under these themes is found to suggest either a disconnection in *practice*, a *perceived* disconnection or a *caused* disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence. How these disconnections lead to the main conclusion that multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence are not making women and children safer is examined in the remaining chapter, Chapter Seven.

Since examining whether the multi-agency approach to domestic violence has made any difference has been a main aim in the research and arguing that such approaches have, in truth, made little difference is the researcher's main aim in this thesis, Chapters Five, Six and Seven assume a big role in both furthering the research aims and in developing the thesis.

Let us move to Chapter Two.

Chapter Two – The Literature.

1. Introduction.

This Chapter is divided under seven main headings – Domestic Violence And The Battered Women's Movement; The Development Of Refuges; Responses From Service Providers; Policing – The Literature And The Policy; Responses From Service Providers Revisited; The Home Office Crime Prevention Agenda – Promoting Partnership; And Domestic Violence And Multi-Agency Approaches.

Under the heading Domestic Violence, the issue is discussed – what domestic violence is and how extensive it might be. As domestic violence is discussed, we will see that it is a multiple victimisation crime – assaults by the same offender are repeated time and time again. We will also see that women typically experience several kinds of abuse in combination – physical, sexual, emotional and psychological. Finally, we will see that the costs of domestic violence can be enormous – that, as well as physical injuries, the psychological effects can be devastating. We will also see that domestic violence affects children and the community. As possible extent is discussed, we will see that measuring domestic violence is not easy but that around one in four women experience domestic violence sometime in their lives.

Under The Development Of Refuges, the emergence of the battered women's movement is discussed. We will see that in the late 1960s and early 1970s the women's liberation movement provided the base for a movement that would both assist battered women and challenge patriarchal ideas and practices – the battered women's movement. We will see that the first refuge for battered women emerged in 1972 and that more than 40 refuges had been established by 1974, the same year in which the National Women's Aid Federation emerged. We will think about the roles played by refuges and the services provided by Women's Aid at both national and local level. This section about the development of refuges is important because it highlights that early responses to domestic violence were firmly grounded in women's liberation.

Under Responses From Service Providers, we will see that in the 1970s and early 1980s there soon emerged a vast literature on the character, incidence and prevalence of domestic violence and, increasingly, on service provision to women and children experiencing domestic violence. We will consider the emerging literature on the responses provided by the medical profession and local authority social service and housing departments. We will see that common threads run through this literature – that

there has been a gap between the assistance that has in theory been available and that which women have received in practice; that there has been a tendency for service providers to blame women for their 'marital problems'; and that the opinions and needs of the women themselves have often been ignored or marginalized. This section is important in highlighting these common threads.

Though in the 1970s and early 1980s literature proliferated on all aspects of domestic violence, throughout the 1980s there developed an increasing focus on the police. Literature that focuses on police responses to domestic violence is documented under the Policing heading. There, we will see that the literature has centred on an essential argument – that a better police response based on increased intervention has been needed. We will see that this argument has been grounded in another argument – that the police have 'abrogated their protective role' through not intervening in domestic violence. We will also see, however, that more recent literature that has questioned interventionist responses and favoured more integrative responses assumes a more nuanced position on policing domestic violence and, in doing so, highlights the interaction between *support* and *safety*. Finally, we will move to examine whether the ideas seen in the development of the literature on policing domestic violence have been mirrored at policy level. There, we will see that, although police domestic violence policy has sometimes been shaped by ideas in the literature, more recent domestic violence developments seem to have occurred at *policy* level, specifically in the Home Office's crime prevention agenda.

As we consider both literature and policy on policing domestic violence, we will see a move to more integrated and holistic approaches. As Responses From Service Providers Revisited is covered, the organizations that might represent that more holistic approach are set out. There, we will see that, although state agencies are increasingly recognizing that domestic violence is an issue and guidance domestic violence has abounded, most service provision on domestic violence remains concentrated in domestic violence organizations such as Women's Aid. This section is important, then, because it highlights that, though developments are happening at policy level, the organizations responding to domestic violence are those that have their roots in the women's movement.

Under the Home Office Crime Prevention Agenda, the move to a more corporatist approach is documented. Here, we trace discourse on partnership approaches to crime prevention between 1980 and 1998 and see the increasing focus on partnership in policy

discourse. Then, we examine the multi-agency approach *in practice*. We examine some early initiatives, discussed in some early studies, about the developing partnership approach. Commentating on partnership in crime prevention, we identify three main themes around which discussion has revolved – *attendance*, *structures* and *power*.

Finally, under Domestic Violence And Multi-Agency Approaches we set out both policy and practice on partnership approaches in domestic violence. On policy, we will see that domestic violence has become increasingly grounded in the 'partnership orthodoxy' that characterizes the Home Office's crime prevention agenda – we will see that the government has, since 1999, had, as one of three 'goals', the goal to 'within five years see effective multi-agency partnerships operating throughout England and Wales'. We also examine multi-agency approaches on domestic violence in practice, looking especially at the research of Gill Hague and her colleagues in Bristol. We add another theme around which discussion has revolved – *outcomes* – after our discussions on multi-agency approaches to domestic violence. So, at the end of Chapter Two, these four themes – attendance, structures, outcomes and power – provide the basis around which certain research questions are organized.

These research questions derive from the numerous interesting points raised in the literature on partnership approaches to both crime prevention and domestic violence. The points raised in the literature on partnership approaches are used in developing the main research questions because each appears to merit greater examination. Certainly, points raised in the literature on partnership approaches in crime prevention appear to need greater examination vis-à-vis partnership in *domestic violence*. The points raised in the literature on partnership approaches in domestic violence are used in developing the main research questions because a main issue that needs to be examined is whether the same points raised in Hague and colleagues' research are also raised in the current research. Finally, the points raised in the literature on partnership approaches in crime prevention and domestic violence are used in developing the main research questions because some such points raise more questions than they answer.

2. Domestic Violence.

Repeat Victimization.

Domestic violence is a repeat victimisation crime – assaults by the same offender are, almost without exception, repeated. Pahl (1985) interviewed 42 women escaping to a refuge because of domestic violence and found that 62% had suffered violence for three

or more years. Binney et al. (1985) interviewed 656 women who had been resident in a refuge for over 24 hours and found that 73% had suffered violence for three or more years. The Dobashes (1979) found that most of the 109 women interviewed residing in or who had just moved out of refuges in Scotland reported violent incidents occurring twice each week. These findings might be grounded in interviewing women in refuges. There is evidence that women normalize domestic violence (see especially Bush and Hood-Williams 1995) but women escaping to refuges will have started to define themselves as 'a victim of domestic violence'. The accounts of women in refuges, who will have begun to understand their experiences to be repeat domestic violence, might be expected to show repeat victimisation.

Nonetheless, the 1996 British Crime Survey (BCS)[8] also found a high level of repeat victimization within the past year (Mirlees-Black 1999). Half the women in the BCS who reported being assaulted by their partners in the past year had been assaulted three or more times ('chronic female victims'). Others reported being assaulted 'once or twice' ('intermittent female victims'). An interesting point here is that the BCS found that, when asked whether they thought that their most recent experience of domestic assault[9] made them a 'victim of domestic violence', two-thirds of chronic victims *did* consider that the last incident made them a 'victim of domestic violence'. This does not necessarily mean that these women will have defined themselves 'as abused' but again there seems to be a correlation between women understanding that they have suffered domestic violence and them reporting repeat victimization.

Other research has also shown the multiple victimization nature of domestic violence. Farrell et al. (1993) outline the initial findings of a Home Office Police Research Group funded pilot Merseyside police project to prevent such repeat victimization. They report that a high proportion of calls to the police, coded by the police as domestic incidents, between February 1989 and March 1991 came from a small proportion of households. Further, there was a high chance that one domestic incident call to the police would quickly be followed by a further call. Following a first incident, 35% of households suffered a second within five weeks. Following a second incident, 45% of

[8]The BCS questions a sample of householders about crimes committed against them within a recent time period. To question respondents about domestic violence a Computer Assisted Self-Interviewing component was used in the 1996 survey which aimed to increase confidentiality and anonymity (see later discussion). The BCS questions both men and women. As mentioned, this research will focus exclusively on women (and their children). No reference will be made in the following discussion to the findings of the BCS regarding men as victims of domestic violence.

[9] Confined in the BCS to physical violence.

households suffered a third within five weeks (see Farrell and Pease 1993; Lloyd et al. 1994).

The Abuse.

Women typically experience several kinds of abuse in combination – physical, sexual, emotional and psychological. The physical violence that women experience can be diverse – pushing; shoving; slapping; hitting; punching; kicking; biting; scalding; burned with cigarettes; set fire to; choking; hitting with weapons; strangulation; stabbing; shooting thrown out of or hit by moving cars; thrown down stairs and out of windows (see Gelles 1974; Pahl 1978; 1985; Pagelow 1981; Binney et al. 1981, 1985; Dobash and Dobash 1980, Dobash et al. 1985; Stanko 1985; Smith 1989; Edwards 1989; Morley and Mullender 1994; Bush and Hood-Williams 1995; Clifton et al. 1996; Walker and McNichol 1994; Mama 1996; Hague and Malos 1998; Mooney 1999). Other women report that the violence is less severe than this. Nonetheless, less severe violence can be no less damaging to women.

The 1996 BCS questioned respondents about their most recent experience of domestic assault to examine the incident and its effects. Questioning respondents about their most recent victimization incident might not be totally representative in domestic violence. It is probable that the most recent incident will be one in a series of violent incidents. Further, where the violence escalates over time, the last incident will tend to be increasingly more severe (see Mirlees-Black 1999). Nonetheless, the BCS found that pushing, shoving and grabbing were the most common types of violence – reported by 69% of chronic female victims. Chronic female victims were kicked, slapped or hit in 56% of incidents and 27% reported having something thrown at them. These women also reported being choked, strangled or suffocated (19%) and having weapons threatened or used against them (13% and 9% respectively). Chronic female victims reported being bruised in 58% of most recent incidents; having scratches (22%); having cuts (15%); and suffering broken bones (6%). Injuries sustained by these women tended to be more severe than those sustained by intermittent victims[10].

Other research suggests that the most common form of injury women report is bruising and swelling, concentrated on the head, body and face, particularly the eyes, as well as cuts and wounds; broken bones, including arms, legs, noses, jaws and ribs (Dobash and Dobash 1984; Walker and McNichol 1994; Mama 1996; Mooney 1999, 2000). Some

[10] Though where these intermittent victims become chronic victims, as discussed above, their injuries might become more severe.

assaults cause very severe injuries. Women might suffer scars; concussion; severe internal injury; permanent physical injury (Morley and Mullender 1994, Clifton et al. 1996; Mooney 2000). Numerous women interviewed in refuges have reported that their injuries needed medical attention – almost 80% of women interviewed by the Dobashes (1980) had sought medical assistance at least once for their injuries and 30% of the 84 women interviewed by Binney et al. (1981) had been hospitalized (see Pahl 1985). The BCS reports that one fifth of chronic female victims had sought medical assistance following their most recent victimization.

Sexual abuse can also be a common experience for women in domestic violence situations. Dominy and Radford (1996) found that just under one quarter of the 484 women they surveyed in Surrey reported being forced to have sex with their abuser or into degrading and sometimes violent sex. Painter and Farrington (1998) approached 1,007 married women nationally and found that around 58% of women reported having sex when disinclined or reluctant; 13% had had sex "...clearly against their will..." (1998: 265); around 5% had been threatened with violence; and around 4% had been the victims of sexual violence. These researchers did not use the word 'rape' when questioning women but found that around 14% of women *had* been raped – 6% had been raped following threatened or actual violence. Both these surveys raise methodological issues[11]. Nonetheless, research based in refuges shows that women report being forced to have sex; being sexually assaulted; and being forced into violent sexual practices by abusers (Binney et al. 1981; Russell 1982; Frieze 1983, cited in Stanko 1985). Sexual violence was specially mentioned as a reason for leaving home by 4% of women in research by Binney and her colleagues (1981).

Women also report living under the constant shadow of threats of violence. Many women report that they also suffer emotional and psychological abuse. Sometimes termed 'mental violence', this generally involves degradation and humiliation; persistent undermining, ridicule, criticism, intimidation, unpredictable behaviour and

[11] Dominy and Radford (1996) located a 'health and safety information stand' in ten shopping malls and markets, during weekdays, from which they handed women questionnaires. Clearly, approaching women in this manner might exclude women in paid employment, education and, further, women unable to go shopping alone or those having their movements monitored. Also, on the one hand, abused women might, through fear and/or shame, have avoided the stand. On the other hand, some women might, for whatever reason, have been keen to tell somebody about their experiences and the sample might have over-represented these women. Painter and Farrington (1998) approached 1,007 married women on the street to question them about marital violence and rape. Though on a bigger scale, this research also excluded some women, most especially unmarried women. Marriage is a point at which violence can begin but is not the only relationship in which such abuse occurs. One may take a narrow definition of domestic violence and restrict it to 'intimate relationships'. Yet, intimate relationships can occur outside of marriage – the most obvious example being co-habitation.

contradictory demands (Clifton et al. 1996; Dominy and Radford 1996; Mama 1996; Mooney 1999, 2000). Men might also psychologically abuse their partners by withholding money from them. Women interviewed in Pahl's (1985) researched highlighted that controlling money was usually part of a more general effort to control them (see Dobash and Dobash 1980; Evason 1982; Mama 1996). Sometimes women report that their abuser controls the clothes they wear and some have described being shut in the house, not being able to go out (Binney et al. 1981; Hague and Malos 1998).

Indeed, control is the central feature of all that is described as domestic violence. Domestic violence relationships can be characterized by the pervasive control the abuser seeks to exert over the woman. Here, control and *power* are inextricably linked. As Radford and Stanko say, the "...family is a central institution in patriarchal society, one in which private struggles around patriarchal *power* relations are enacted, and hence one in which violence often features as a form of *control* of the powerless by the powerful..." (1991: 200. Italics supplied).

The costs of domestic violence on those involved can be extensive. As well as the physical damage sustained, because the perpetrator is a 'loved one' domestic violence can have particularly devastating psychological effects (Dominy and Radford 1996). Women report living in fear; nervousness; high levels of anxiety; suspiciousness; panic attacks; depression; reduced confidence; self-blame; insomnia; the development of eating disorders; suicidal feelings (Dobash and Dobash 1980; Binney et al. 1981; Pahl 1985; Martin 1987, cited in Smith 1989; Stanko 1985; Clifton et al. 1996; Hague and Malos 1998; Mirlees-Black 1999; Mooney 1999, 2000).

The effect on children of witnessing, experiencing and living with domestic violence is an area of increasing concern (Morley and Mullender 1994; Hague and Malos 1998)[12]. The children of women suffering domestic violence can often be involved in the violent incidents and might be hurt themselves (Hanmer 1990, cited in Morley and Mullender 1994; Hague and Malos 1998). Children experiencing domestic violence tend to suffer emotional, behavioural and cognitive problems in childhood – children can suffer guilt; confusion; anger; fear; withdrawn behaviour; aggression; bedwetting; clingy behaviour (Jaffe et al. 1990, cited in Hague and Malos 1998; WAFE 1992; Mullender 2000; Mooney 2000). Seemingly, where there is child abuse the likelihood is very high that there will also be domestic violence (Hanmer 1989; NCH Action for Children 1994;

[12] A full discussion about domestic violence and children is outside the scope of this chapter. For a fuller discussion, see Mullender and Morley (1994); Humphries (2000).

Mullender and Morley 1994; Mullender 2000). The threat posed by domestic violence to unborn children is also accepted – violence is a common occurrence during pregnancy, sometimes increasing at this time (Dobash and Dobash 1980; Pahl 1985; DoH et al. 1998; DoH 1999; Mooney 1999).

Finally, recent research conducted in the London Borough of Hackney suggests that the economic costs of domestic violence are enormous. This research was conducted by Stanko and colleagues, who approximate the costs of domestic violence in one local authority during 1996. Stanko et al. (1996) calculate the selected costs to the public sector for domestic violence in Hackney to be over £5 million. Assuming that this calculation is based on only two-thirds of women's formal contacts for help, these researchers estimate that the costs of providing assistance, support and advice for domestic violence in Hackney to be around £7.5 million in 1996. They further estimate the costs in providing assistance, support and advice for those facing domestic violence in Greater London to be £278 million.

Possible Extent.

Although there are problems in measuring domestic violence, most discussions on domestic violence give some consideration to the extent of the problem (see Ferrante et al. 1996). The problems in measuring domestic violence largely derive from the information sources used[13]. Police records and records from other service providers are two such sources but both provide a measure of domestic violence based only on the number of victims seeking assistance. A considerable number of those experiencing domestic violence will never seek assistance from the police or other service providers or will seek assistance only following years of repeated and severe abuse and violence (see Mooney 1999). Specifically, police figures do not include the numerous domestic violence offences that do not come to police notice. The recording practices of the police compound the pattern of statistical attrition of domestic violence (Ferrante et al. 1996; see Edwards 1989; Sorsby and Shapland 1995; Hoyle 1998). Likewise, though the extent of domestic violence *might* be reflected in the number of victims seeking the services of hospitals, housing services, telephone helplines and refuges, there are numerous reasons why many women experiencing domestic violence will never seek the assistance of these service providers.

[13] A full analysis of the problems of measuring domestic violence is outside the scope of this Chapter and only a few points are made here. Jayne Mooney's (1996, 1999, 2000) discussions are an excellent reference point for such an analysis.

According to the Home Office, the 1996 BCS "...provides the most reliable findings to date on the extent of domestic violence in England and Wales..." (Mirlees-Black 1999: iii). More generally, crime surveys are seen as a 'better' measure than official statistics. Certainly, they developed, in America in the 1960s and in Britain in the 1980s with the BCS, as an effort to assess the 'dark figure' of crimes either not reported to the police or, having been reported, not officially recorded (Maguire 1997). Yet, surveys too – especially those about distressing topics such as domestic violence – have a 'dark figure' and there remains a high probability that the BCS underestimates the real extent of domestic violence[14].

Nonetheless, what extent did the 1996 BCS find? The 1996 BCS questioned men and women aged 16-59 and covered frightening threats and physical assaults between people who were in or who had been in an 'intimate relationship'. On life-time experiences, 23% of women said they had experienced an assault from a current or former partner at some time in their lives – 26% said they had experienced an assault and/or a frightening threats. On last year experiences, 4.2% of women said they had been assaulted by a current or former partner – 5.9% said they had experienced physical assault and/or frightening threats.

According to Jayne Mooney, her North London Domestic Violence Survey provides still more reliable findings on the extent of domestic violence. The North London survey was in three stages. In stage one, an interviewer-administered questionnaire was administered to 571 women and 429 men. Stage two centred on women respondents only. A sample of women interviewed for the first stage were handed a supplementary self-complete questionnaire on domestic violence, together with a stamped addressed envelope. Questionnaires were handed out to 535 women – 480 questionnaires were returned (an 80% response rate). In stage three, in depth interviews were conducted with women who had experienced domestic violence. Women who had spoken about their experiences in stage one of the project were asked whether they would be prepared to be interviewed again – 15 women were interviewed. Mooney reports that:

> "...violence from a partner is scarcely a rare phenomenon. Whether it is defined as mental cruelty, threats, actual violence with injury or rape, it has occurred to at least one quarter to a third of all women in their lifetime..." (1999: 31).

[14] Again, a full analysis of this issue is outside the scope of this Chapter. For a fuller discussion see Walby and Myhill (2000).

Mooney (1999) found further that 12% of women had experienced actual physical violence from their partners in the last twelve months, 8% of all women had been injured and 6% raped by their partners (see Mooney 2000).

Stanko and her colleagues used different methodologies to examine the prevalence of domestic violence in one local authority area, the London Borough of Hackney. Stanko et al. (1998; see Stanko 2000) explored the records of certain agencies and estimated the proportion of domestic violence cases in these records. These researchers then drew on McGibbon et al.'s (1989) findings to develop a 'prevalence formula':

> Number of women who contact agency about violence (from agency records) (A) divided by proportion of A who contact individual agency (based on McGibbon et al's (1989) findings) (B) equals total prevalence estimate (C) (Stanko et al. 1998).

They then applied this formula to the data collected from agency records to estimate prevalence in one year in Hackney. So, Stanko et al. (1989) estimated that around 1,316 victims of domestic violence throughout Hackney in 1996 reported at least one incident of domestic violence to the police that was recorded as a crime – they estimated that 1,250 of these were women. Drawing on McGibbon's (1989) finding that 24% of women experiencing domestic violence would have contacted the police, Stanko et al. (1998) apply the prevalence formula to estimate that 5,208 women aged 16 and over throughout Hackney experienced domestic violence in 1996 – a calculated prevalence of one in 15 women. Stanko et al. (1998) apply the prevalence formula to the data collected from *each* agency's records. The highest prevalence was calculated from a GP surgery's waiting room. Stanko et al. (1998) use this prevalence – one in nine – as the estimated prevalence throughout Hackney.

Other local surveys include Dominy and Radford's (1996) research in Surrey. Here, of the 484 women completing questionnaires, 31% said they had experienced 'domestic violence' from a known man some time in their adult lives. A further 15% said they had experienced abuse from a known man but did not consider this to be domestic violence. Also, Painter and Farrington's (1998) survey found that 25% of married women and 59% of unmarried women had been hit at some time by a husband or ex-husband[15].

[15] As seen earlier, both Dominy and Radford's (1996) and Painter and Farrington's (1998) surveys raise methodological points. Indeed, more generally, local surveys raise methodological points (see Mirlees-Black 1995).

In summary, domestic violence is a multiple victimisation crime – assaults by the same offender are repeated time and time again. Women typically experience several kinds of abuse in combination – physical, sexual, emotional and psychological. Central to all that is described as domestic violence are *control* and *power*. The costs of domestic violence can be enormous – for women, their children and the community. Finally, around one in four women experience domestic violence sometime in their lives.

3. The Battered Women's Movement and the Development of Refuges.

Notwithstanding its incidence, character, costs and prevalence, domestic violence was not on the agenda of social problems until the early 1970s when "...a new social movement emerged that would not only directly and unequivocally assist battered women but would also, through its policies, procedures, and actions, directly and indirectly challenge patriarchal ideas and practices..." (Dobash and Dobash 1979: 223). This movement was the battered women's movement (see Smith 1989; Hague and Malos 1998). Arguably, it was only then that the general victimization question began to be addressed as, with the development of the mass victimization survey, criminological interest in the victim increased (see Zedner 1997).

Though victimization research and the victim movement were increasingly significant, concern over domestic violence and the emergence of the battered women's movement were for the most part the preserve of the women's movement. Indeed, in the late 1960s and early 1970s this women's liberation movement "...provided the base of membership and the overall perspective from which numerous issues could be addressed..." (Dobash and Dobash 1992: 16) – domestic violence was one such issue. Certainly, Borkowski et al. (1983) have argued that domestic violence might have remained hidden had the growing women's liberation movement at that time not regarded it as symptomatic of the more general oppression of women in patriarchal society (see Dobash and Dobash 1987, 1992).

The battered women's movement began in Britain in 1972 when feminists established the Goldhawk Road Women's Liberation Movement Centre in Chiswick, London. This Centre, where women could discuss their problems and find mutual support, was like others that were being established by feminists in Britain and other countries to provide a "...focal point for mutual support, discussion, and political action..." (Dobash and Dobash 1979: 223). It was in this centre that women began to disclose the systematic and severe abuse and violence they received from their husbands (Pizzey 1974; Dobash and Dobash 1979, 1987, 1992; Sutton 1978). When a woman escaping her abusive

husband was allowed to use the centre as emergency, temporary accommodation, the Chiswick women's centre became a 24 hour refuge for battered women – by April 1973 it had an average daily population of 25 women and children. There was much overcrowding – "...the refuge was literally bursting at the seams..." (Dobash and Dobash 1992: 63). The overcrowding made a strong point about demand and generated considerable media interest.

Indeed, it is this dual role played by refuges that has made them so integral to the battered women's movement. In addition to providing accommodation to which women can escape abuse and violence, refuges have also served a symbolic purpose by illustrating women's dependence on others for their basic accommodation needs. Further, by providing women with such basic accommodation, refuges have served to challenge what is regarded as a crucial part of patriarchal control – economic dependence of women upon men for their basic needs (Dobash and Dobash 1992). Indeed, it could be said that "...the refuge stands simultaneously as an essential aspect of supporting women subjected to male violence and of rejecting patriarchal control of women..." (Dobash and Dobash 1992: 63).

In addition to discovering women's need for accommodation, the battered women's movement soon discovered and promoted an understanding that, by working with them according to their own problems and needs, refuges could empower women to take decisions about their circumstances and futures (Dobash and Dobash 1980; Hague and Malos 1998). Indeed, throughout, the refuge movement has had as "...foundation stones..." principles grounded in "...self-help, self-determination and empowerment..." (Hague and Malos 1998: 39). Self-help involves women working with women for women to establish services to deal with male violence (Sutton 1978). Self-determination is grounded in an understanding that women should be able to determine their own lives and futures and to take control back from their abusers. Empowerment centres on assisting abused women to develop the resources – emotional and economic – to make appropriate decisions about their circumstances (Hague and Malos 1998). By their very existence refuges enshrine these principles.

Chiswick Women's Aid had raised consciousness about domestic violence and soon women's activists began to involve themselves in the problem by establishing new groups or by taking on the issue as part of existing women's liberation groups (Dobash and Dobash 1987, 1992). These groups began to fight for and establish refuges throughout Britain, based on the model of the original refuge at Chiswick (Dobash and

Dobash 1979). More than 40 refuges had been established by 1974 (Hague and Malos 1998). Between 1978 and 1980 Val Binney and her colleagues conducted research which sought to examine the extent of refuge provision nationally. In 1978 they were able to trace 150 refuges in England and Wales providing emergency accommodation to women and children (Binney et al. 1981). They found that these refuges had accommodated an estimated 11,400 women and 20,850 children between September 1977 and September 1978, turning numerous others away – at any one time, they report that there were around 900 women and 1,700 children living in them (Binney et al. 1981).

In addition to this focus on providing emergency accommodation and support for women and children escaping violence in the home, these local groups sought to turn public attention to the existence of domestic violence and raise public awareness about its extent and severity. Soon a national network emerged, through which these local Women's Aid groups could develop a co-ordinated effort to publicize and highlight the problem. This was the National Women's Aid Federation[16], established during 1974 and 1975. The Federation began with 35 founding groups. General principles derived from the women's liberation movement were translated into its original basic principles (Sutton 1978; Dobash and Dobash 1987, 1992)[17]. Since its inception, the Women's Aid movement has expanded such that there are now more than 300 Women's Aid groups in Great Britain. Some refuges are not associated with Women's Aid. Nonetheless, most refuges work with Women's Aid to provide a national refuge network and refuges provided by Women's Aid and other associated organizations can now be found in most towns and cities throughout Great Britain, with some existing in rural areas (Hague and Malos 1998). Further, Women's Aid has developed its services and now provides numerous national and local services in addition to emergency and temporary accommodation.

[16] The National Women's Aid Federation initially covered Great Britain as a whole. In 1978, distinct national organizations were established in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, each administering their local groups (Dobash and Dobash 1992).

[17] These principles were to provide temporary refuge, on request, for women and their children who have suffered mental or physical harassment; to encourage the women to determine their own futures and to help them achieve them, whether this involved returning home or starting a new life elsewhere; to recognize and care for the emotional and educational needs of the children involved; to offer support and advice to any woman who asks for it, whether or not she is a resident, and also to offer support and aftercare to any woman and child who has left the refuge; to educate and inform the public, the media, the police, the courts, social services, and other authorities, with respect to the battering of women, mindful of the fact that this is a result of the general position of women in our society.

At a national level, Women's Aid has continually sought to raise awareness about domestic violence and has monitored and campaigned for comprehensive services to meet the needs of abused women and children (Hague and Malos 1998). In addition to this general awareness raising, Women's Aid delivers advice, support and training services to local domestic violence projects and other relevant agencies and organizations. The Women's Aid National Domestic Violence Helpline was established in 1994. It is now part funded by the Department of Health and received over 20,000 calls during 1998 (Hague and Malos 1998; Women's Unit 1999; http://www.womensaid.org.uk).

At a local level, Women's Aid refuges provide emergency and temporary accommodation to women and children – in England alone more than 52,000 women and children escape to refuges each year (Harwin 1999). Some such women will be black and ethnic minority women and provision to these women has increased within the Women's Aid movement. Within refuges, Women's Aid runs support groups for women and provides children with support and assistance through the work of specialist children's workers. Finally, Women's Aid and the refuge movement have been involved in developing advocacy and outreach responses to domestic violence – such responses are seen as essential developments in service provision (Kelly and Humphreys 2000). Advocacy workers provide women experiencing domestic violence with support, information and advice at an individual level and also liaise with other agencies and organizations to negotiate issues such as housing, legal support and benefits (Burton et al. 1998; Kelly and Humphreys 2000). Outreach responses support women in their homes and communities. They support women living in violent relationships, leaving violent relationships and those moving on following refuge accommodation. Outreach services also aim to support traditionally hard to reach women such as ethnic minority women; disabled women; those with mental health problems; and women living in rural areas. An outreach response can involve services such as specialized domestic violence helplines; women's information and support services; drop-in-centres; 'one-stop-shops'; and specialized outreach projects (Kelly and Humphreys 2000).

How do women perceive the services provided by Women's Aid and refuges? First, the research conducted by Val Binney and her colleagues between 1978 and 1980 examined how 656 women who had been resident in a refuge for over 24 hours experienced living in refuges (Binney et al. 1981). Women reported that they valued the information and

advice provided by refuges. They reported that they found it valuable having the company of other women and living in a community – 55% reported that they liked having other women as company – and women reported that they valued the understanding other women with common domestic violence histories offered – "...I can really talk openly here because they've all been through the same thing..." (Binney et al. 1981: 54; see Smith 1989). Communal living was experienced as especially valuable by women who had been forced into isolation by their abusers (Binney et al. 1981). In addition, women interviewed by Binney et al. (1981) reported that emotional support; being encouraged to begin to assume more responsibility for their own lives; and being involved in the running of the refuge had restored their confidence – women reported feeling more determined and stronger following their stay in the refuge (see Clifton 1985).

One might expect that this research would show Women's Aid providing valuable services to women through its refuge provision. The research was funded by the Department of Environment, working in collaboration with the WAFE, and throughout the study the researchers worked with and were supported by a Women's Aid research group. Further, the researchers' argument throughout was that "...without better funding, the future of refuges is in the balance..." (Binney et al. 1981: 107). By emphasizing that women experience refuges as valuable, the researchers might, understandably, have been seeking to make the case for such better funding. Nonetheless, other research conducted in refuges, independent of the WAFE, has again shown that women have valued the support and services provided by refuges (Dobash and Dobash 1980; Pahl 1985; Clifton 1985).

Research that has not accessed women through refuges paints a similar picture. Nonetheless, when considering how women perceive refuges, it should be remembered that their perceptions might depend on their circumstances. For instance, women approached on the street by Dominy and Radford (1996) reported that they had valued the mutual support provided in refuges. Yet, by approaching women in this manner, Dominy and Radford (1996) might have accessed domestic violence survivors, beginning new lives. Indeed they report that women had said that refuges "...had played a vital part in the process of leaving and recovering from domestic violence..." (Dominy and Radford 1996: 97). Nevertheless, it does seem that women value the services provided by Women's Aid and refuges and that they are "...a particular success story..." (Morley and Mullender 1994: 31).

So this section has documented the discovery of domestic violence and the development of the battered women's movement. This section is important because it highlights that early responses to domestic violence were firmly grounded in women's liberation – that increasing recognition and awareness about domestic violence simply extended understanding about women's oppression and their secondary position in society and the family (Dobash and Dobash 1992).

The women's movement had also created the environment for a "...plethora of studies..." (Hoyle 1998: 3) on the character, incidence and prevalence of domestic violence. Further, during this "...knowledge explosion..." (Kelly 1988: 43), research was also directed towards assessing responses provided by statutory services – the services women received from social services, housing services, and the medical profession. A vast literature emerged embracing all issues around domestic violence, though there soon developed an increasing focus on the criminal justice system, especially the police. Thus, throughout the 1980s a considerable body of research literature emerged which focused on the police response to domestic violence. It is to a consideration of the literature about the responses from service providers that discussion must now turn.

4. Responses From Other Service Providers.

During the 1970s and early 1980s a substantial body of research emerged which sought to examine service provision to women in domestic violence situations. Indeed, the 1978-1980 research by Val Binney and her colleagues which was funded by the Department of Environment, working in collaboration with the WAFE, had a central aim which was "...to show what services are presently being provided for battered women in this country by statutory and voluntary agencies..." (1981: i) – women were interviewed about the response provided to them by the police, housing departments, social services, doctors and voluntary agencies (Binney et al. 1981). Again, during 1975 and 1976 the Dobashes interviewed women about the response provided by "...the caring agencies, including doctors, social workers, and psychiatrists, and the legal agencies, including police, courts, and lawyers..." (1980: 179). Research was commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) to examine the perceptions of "...solicitors, local authority social workers, health visitors, and general practitioners to marital violence..." (Borkowski et al. 1983: 3). This research was undertaken between 1977 and 1980 in Bristol and reported by Borkowski et al. (1983).

Jan Pahl (1985) also brought together various research studies considering the response to domestic violence by different 'public services'.

Considering the literature about these responses, we begin with responses provided by the medical profession – in particular general practitioners. Most research on doctors' responses relies on accounts given by women themselves (Pahl, 1978; Dobash and Dobash 1980; Pagelow, 1981; Binney et al., 1981; Dobash et al. 1985). Research based on such accounts shows that women are reluctant to approach a doctor for assistance and that, when they do visit their doctor, are reluctant to disclose domestic violence (Pahl, 1978; Dobash and Dobash 1980; Pagelow, 1981). Thus, research shows that women tend to hint at their problems in the hope that doctors will save them a direct disclosure by probing further (Pahl, 1978; Dobash and Dobash 1980). Yet, doctors have seemed reluctant to be told about domestic violence and have denied women the opportunity to reveal how their injuries were sustained, by listening, though not responding, and avoiding probing the matter in a manner which might encourage women to overcome their reticence (Dobash and Dobash 1980; Smith 1989). Further, women sometimes seek to misrepresent the cause of their injuries (Pahl, 1978; Dobash and Dobash 1980). Again, doctors have been said to be reluctant to question women about the causes of their injuries, even where it is clear the explanation given for them has been fabricated – instead treatment has usually involved "...bandaging wounds from an 'unknown source'..." (Dobash and Dobash 1980: 181). This reluctance is said to lead to a "...mutual denial of the violence...[and]...a conspiracy of silence..." (Dobash and Dobash 1980: 181). By ignoring the violence, and thus its associated problems, doctors, it is said, have been be unable (or unwilling) to provide women with advice about available resources – only 2% of the 656 women resident in a refuge interviewed by Binney et al. (1981) had been referred there by their doctor. Further, it is argued that doctors have denied women even a "...modicum of much needed moral and emotional support..." (Dobash and Dobash 1980: 187). In common with the 42 women escaping to a refuge because of domestic violence interviewed by Pahl (1985), women interviewed by Binney et al. (1981) reported much higher satisfaction levels when doctors were concerned with all the problems they faced, rather than focusing on their injuries.

In addition, research based on women's accounts reveals the tendency doctors have shown towards prescribing tranquilizers (Pahl 1979; Borkowski et al. 1983). The Dobashes interviewed 109 women in Scotland and found that 40% of the 87 women

interviewed who had visited a doctor voluntarily reported that they had been given such medication. The Dobashes (1980) argue that, had the women in their research been asked a direct question about whether they had been given drugs, this percentage would have been higher. Again, the Dobashes (1980) present research by Elston, Fuller and Murch (1976) that found that, from 17 women seeking assistance from a doctor, 16 had been given drugs (see Dobash et al. 1985). Much literature criticizes this tendency. Moreover, Binney et al. (1981) found that one third of women reporting low satisfaction levels with the response provided by doctors were especially critical of this tendency to offer tranquilizers. Indeed, Dobash and Dobash (1980) found that women considered that drugs were used as an alternative to dealing with the real problem – "...he just listens to me, you know, and gives me Valium..." (1980: 191).

Research focused on the attitudes of doctors shows that they have seen their role in pure medical treatment terms and have been concerned only with "...treating injuries and illnesses – real medicine..." (Smith 1989: 73; Borkowski et al. 1983). Borkowski et al. (1983) interviewed 50 general practitioners in the Bristol area about, inter alia, how they defined their role when dealing with general marital problems, including domestic violence[18]. Only half the doctors interviewed considered it 'real medicine' to be concerned with their patients' marital problems. Those respondents who did not, argued that they were not trained to deal with such wider, associated problems and that they did not have time to probe for details about these problems.

Doctors' failure to comprehend or seek to understand presenting problems has never been exclusive to domestic violence (see Temkin 1996). Nevertheless, the literature reporting doctors' seeming reluctance towards embracing a more expansive role is interesting. The literature emphasizes concerns about such reluctance, and more generally about the services provided by doctors. It centres on an idea encountered more generally throughout the domestic violence literature – that there is a difference between how women define service providers' roles in relation to domestic violence and how service providers themselves define their roles.

The response provided by social services is also significant. Some research has been based on interviews conducted with social workers themselves (Borkowski et al. 1983; see Mullender 1996). Other research has drawn on accounts provided by women

[18] The researchers had encountered problems defining 'marital violence' and thus adopted a wider scope for the study – considering general marital problems.

(Binney et al. 1981; Dobash and Dobash 1980). This research tends to show that women have considered that social workers are not interested in them and do not take their situations seriously – some women have reported being told by social workers that there is nothing they can do (Binney et al. 1981; Dobash and Dobash 1980). Certainly, Mary Maynard (1985) examined 103 case records written by social workers during 1977 in one Northern town. The cases were obtained by a one in ten random sample, 34 of which contained direct reference to domestic violence. Examining these case files, Maynard (1985) reports that "...for the vast majority of women the files indicate that nothing was done to immediately relieve the situation..." (1985: 129).

Maynard found that social workers sought to "...restore a domestic equilibrium..." (1985: 137) and encouraged women to remain with their abuser. Indeed, Dobash and Dobash argue that social workers "...exist to reinforce and protect the nuclear family against dissolution, and this goal is often achieved at a very high cost to some family members..." (1980: 203). Binney et al.'s (1981) research also found that social workers sought to reconcile women to their abusers through counselling or perceived themselves to be mediators in the situation. Both Maynard (1985) and Binney et al. found that sometimes children were used to stop women leaving "...social services...said 'all we can do if you want to leave is we'll take the children off you and take them into care and we don't want that do we?'..." (1981: 19). Further, Maynard (1985) found that, in most cases, concern for children was considered by social workers to be paramount. Dobash and Dobash (1980) also found that social workers were focused on children, sometimes to the exclusion of women's needs, though they concede that "...this type of response may reflect the statutory obligations of social service departments to protect children from violence – no such provision exists regarding women..." (1980: 298).

Nonetheless, the Dobashes argue that the response provided by social services "...illustrates a philosophy which emphasizes the maintenance of the traditional position of men and women as husbands and wives..." (1980: 205). Further, they argue that some social workers have believed that women consider violence to be normal and acceptable and, as such, have dealt with the cases in a manner which "...is not oriented toward either eliminating the violence or helping the woman escape from it..." (Dobash and Dobash 1980: 202). Maynard also argues that judgments made by social workers about women are crucial to understanding the apathy that has been shown by social workers to women experiencing domestic violence. She found that social workers made assessments about women which were grounded in their ideas about 'normal' personal

and domestic characteristics and that, where women were deemed to be personally and domestically incompetent, social workers regarded this as indicative of more general individual failings and responded accordingly. Maynard (1985) further argues that social workers have colluded with abusers in believing that violence is a understandable response to domestic and personal failings – "...if the woman is somehow deviant in the way she looks after herself, her husband, and her home, then social workers feel they can understand, although not of course condone, his subsequent violent action..." (1985: 134). In numerous cases, Maynard (1985) found an implication that women were somehow responsible for the violence. Sometimes, social workers were more explicit – "...it seems her nagging is the trigger for the violence..." (Maynard 1985: 135).

Much discussion in the literature has also focused on women's efforts to secure accommodation, especially their efforts to obtain more permanent housing[19]. Binney and colleagues (1981, 1985) obtained details about the accommodation into which women interviewed in refuges the previous year had moved and examined whether these women had succeeded in securing permanent housing for themselves and their children, considering in particular whether they obtained permanent housing from local authorities. They found that, though then recent legislation – The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 – had imposed duties on local authorities to house women made homeless by domestic violence, only 44% of women were so housed (Binney et al. 1981). Further, Binney and colleagues (1981, 1985) examined the reasons given by housing departments for not agreeing to house abused women as homeless persons. They found that the main reason given was that women were deemed 'not homeless'. This reason was sometimes given when women were living in refuges, at other times it was given when women could not provide visible evidence, such as bruises, that they had been abused. Other women were deemed 'not in priority need', especially when they had no dependent children and sometimes when they were pregnant, contrary to the Act. Some were deemed (questionably) to be 'intentionally homeless'. Essentially, Binney et al. (1981, 1985) argue that women's housing needs were not being taken seriously by housing departments – "...rather than being treated sympathetically, [women] were more likely to be sent to the bottom of the pile..." (1985: 178). Further,

[19] Though women do need more than permanent accommodation. Indeed, women's housing needs are complex and depend on each woman's current circumstances. Some women's need for accommodation is immediate. Some women's need for accommodation is temporary – sometimes women want to leave abusive relationships for breathing space. Some women need more than accommodation away from their abuser – numerous women need to move to accommodation where they cannot be found by him (see Pahl 1978; Binney et al. 1981).

they report that only a quarter of the women they interviewed were "...satisfied with the treatment they had received from local authorities..." (Binney et al. 1981: 83).

The research by Binney et al. (1981) shows that women approaching housing departments have encountered stereotypical ideas. Indeed, research in Scotland conducted by Mary Brailey (1985) found that such ideas could be crucial in determining how housing departments treat women. These ideas were reported to be, again, based on traditional attitudes about 'the family' and women's position within it. Perceptions about whether domestic violence was an acceptable reason for women to leave home were also encountered.

Seemingly, service provision on domestic violence has been grounded in stereotypical ideas. We have seen that doctors' responses to domestic violence have been grounded in their ideas about their 'proper role' and their belief that 'real medicine' does not extend to their patients' 'martial problems'. Likewise, we have seen that Maynard (1985) found that social workers made assessments about women that were grounded in ideas they held about 'normal' personal and domestic characteristics and that these judgements were crucial to understanding the apathy shown by social workers when responding to domestic violence. Finally, we have seen that traditional attitudes about 'the family' and women's position within it have been crucial in determining how housing departments have treated women. We shall soon see that stereotyped ideas about 'real crime' and the 'deserving victim' have pervaded police responses to domestic violence.

Commenting on the picture painted by her research, Pahl (1985) argues that common threads run through the accounts by women about the response they have received from service providers: that there is a gap between the assistance which is in theory available and that which women receive in practice; that there is a tendency for service providers to blame women for the 'marital problems'; that the opinions and needs of the women themselves are often ignored or marginalized. One might conclude that these common threads run through *all* the literature set out in our discussions examining service providers' responses to domestic violence. It will now be seen that these common threads extend to the literature about police responses to domestic violence.

5. Policing – Literature and Policy.

Having recognized the significance of the domestic violence problem, during the 1970s feminists were concerned to seek, and raise awareness about, explanations and causes of

domestic violence which examined power relations between men and women. Research examining the character, prevalence and incidence of domestic violence, in addition to that assessing responses from service providers, proliferated. Very soon, and increasingly throughout the 1980s, there developed an increasing focus on the criminal justice system, especially the police. Possibly, this increased focus centred on the police as 'first responders' to most domestic violence situations[20]? Whatever, much of the research literature that emerged was based on empirical research undertaken by feminists in America and Britain which, through observations and interviews, explored how the police were dealing with domestic violence incidents – looking especially at whether or not they were arresting abusers – and examined police attitudes in relation to domestic violence (Pagelow 1981; Oppendlander 1982; Bowker 1982; Faragher 1985; Edwards 1986; Hanmer 1989).

The picture painted by this research is that police responses have been grounded in a reluctance to intervene in domestic violence (Morley and Mullender 1994). The essential argument on which the literature centres, and which has been propounded by feminist organizations such as the Women's Aid Federation, is that an 'improved' police response based on increased police intervention – arrest leading to prosecution – has been needed (Morley and Mullender 1992; Hoyle 1998).

Such demands for increased criminalization have been based on a vast literature that has shown that, even where conditions have supported an arrest, few perpetrators of domestic violence have been arrested (Dobash and Dobash 1980; Binney et al. 1981; Pagelow 1981; Bowker 1982; Edwards 1986a, b). In his 1978 observation of 26 domestic violence cases attended by the Staffordshire Police, Faragher (1985) found that in ten cases there had been an infringement of the law which could have led to an arrest – five of these involved an assault which he regarded as a section 47 offence, assault occasioning actual bodily harm[21]. Nonetheless, in only two cases was an arrest made. Researching in West Yorkshire, Jalna Hanmer found similar police reluctance to arrest in domestic violence cases. Through interviews with 55 police officers, Hanmer (1989) found that the police would arrest only as a 'last resort' and that some officers had never made an arrest in domestic violence cases. Further, Pagelow (1981) found that even where women had asked the police to arrest the abuser, often no arrest was

[20] It is outside the scope of this Chapter to examine just why it was on the police that attention in the literature increasing focused.

[21] A 'section 47 offence, assault occasioning actual bodily harm' is an offence contrary to The Offences Against The Person Act 1861. This section makes it an offences, punishable with a maximum of five years imprisonment, to commit 'an assault occasioning actual bodily harm'.

made – more than half the 350 women she interviewed who had asked the police to arrest their partners reported that the police had not made an arrest In Bowker's 1982 research, 92% of the 146 women he interviewed had asked the police to arrest. In only 14% of the cases was an arrest made.

Research shows that, rather than arrest, attending officers at a domestic violence incident have often engaged in mediation or reconciliation (Grace 1995). It is argued that this police tendency to "...settle the disturbance..." (Stanko 1989: 57), rather than respond to (domestic) violence with interventions grounded in arrest, leaves women without protection, exposing them to further danger and escalating violence (Edwards 1986a, b; Edwards 1989; Morley and Mullender 1994). Indeed, throughout the literature it is argued that police reluctance to intervene in domestic violence exposes women to further abuse and does not protect them. Those favouring increased intervention grounded in arrest as the desired police response highlight that arrest removes the abuser and provides the victim with immediate protection (see Buzawa and Buzawa 1990, 1996; Morley and Mullender 1992).

It is also said that the "...police [have] abrogate[d] their protective role..." (Faragher 1985:117) by making intervention contingent on the likelihood that the woman will carry through with a prosecution (Morley and Mullender 1994). Throughout the literature it is claimed that the police do not arrest and charge because they assume that it is almost certain women will withdraw charges and not support a prosecution (Oppenlander 1982; Faragher 1985; Stanko 1985, 1989; Edwards 1986, 1989, 1996; Hanmer 1989; Grace 1995; Walker and McNicol 1994; Clifton et al. 1996). According to Stanko, police attitudes tend to be based on perceptions of a "...set pattern..." of behaviour – "...you [the police] arrest the husband and suddenly she's in love again..." (1989:62). Stanko (1985) says that such 'victim reluctance' is a myth and the JUSTICE Committee contends that to assume all domestic violence victims will withdraw their support for prosecution "...slurs..." (1998: 53) such victims.

Further, it is said that the police have tended to place the responsibility for deciding whether charges should be pressed on women themselves. The recent JUSTICE Committee report (1998) notes that it is, indeed, routine in domestic violence cases to ask women whether they want to press charges and, further, that giving victims responsibility for deciding whether charges should be pressed *only* occurs in domestic violence cases (see also Cretney and Davis 1996, 1997). Such routine is heavily criticized in the literature (see especially JUSTICE 1998).

Studies show that where perpetrators have been charged, it has often been with a crime less serious than the incident circumstances suggest. Certainly, Edwards' London research found that in one police division, of all arrests made following an allegation of violence, a crime sheet was opened in only one third of cases. In the remaining two thirds, charges were brought against the abuser for breach of the peace and drunkenness – not for assault or common assault – even though assault was the initial complaint (Edwards 1989, cited in Edwards and Halpern 1991). During their 1978 research, Binney and her colleagues (1981) interviewed 59 women about the police response to the 'worst' assault they had experienced. From the 25 cases that the researchers regarded as 'severe assault' – involving life-threatening attacks such as strangulation and where hospital treatment was needed – only 5% of the perpetrators were charged. Thirty-four other women had suffered severe bruising and black eyes, though only five of these perpetrators were charged.

Such reluctance by police attending domestic violence incidents to invoke criminal law sanctions is considered to be indicative of a general feeling by the police that 'domestics' are a matter for the civil not the criminal law (see Smith 1989; Edwards 1989; Bourlet 1990; Morley and Mullender 1994). This division of available remedies into civil and criminal attracts strong criticism in the literature. Susan Edwards (1989, 1996), in particular, argues that the division symbolically reinforces the public/private dichotomy that assumes violence in a domestic setting is less severe than other violence and which masks the seriousness of 'domestic' violence. As such, this civil/criminal distinction and the symbolic purposes it serves subverts women's protection (Edwards 1996: 191, 1986 a, b; see Hanmer and Maynard 1987, cited in Hanmer 1989; Faragher 1985; Pahl 1985). Indeed, it is this civil/criminal distinction (and the public/private dichotomy it serves) that are central to feminist arguments around the differential treatment of domestic violence and violence not in a domestic setting. These arguments highlight the relevance of police discretion. In considering how such discretion has been exercised, critics have considered police ideas about both 'real crime' and the 'deserving victim' and have examined how these have determined how the police have thought about 'domestics' and, furthermore, how they have responded to them (see Pahl 1985; Faragher 1985; Edwards 1989; Stanko 1989; Edwards 1996). It is argued that police reluctance to intervene in domestic violence incidents reveals that the police do not regard domestic violence as 'real crime' and assume it is not 'real police work' (Smith 1989).

On ideas about 'real crime', it is argued that 'domestics' are considered not 'real police work' because they are seen as 'messy', 'problematic', 'unproductive', 'trivial' and 'rubbish' work (Reiss 1971; Reiner 1978; Faragher 1985; Southgate 1986; Young 1991; Edwards 1996). It is argued that the police have enormous disdain for the 'social service' work involved in 'domestics' and consider they should be engaged instead in adversarial encounters – 'crime fighting'. They consider that 'domestics' prevent them doing real police work and deny them the opportunity – imperative according to Buzawa and Buzawa (1990) – to secure a 'good pinch' and thus gain status with peers. The police thus resent attending such low kudos disturbances (Edwards 1986a, b; Stanko 1989; Buzawa and Buzawa 1990; Hoyle 1998). Edwards (1996) argues that these traditional ideas are "...intransigent..." (1996:197) and Stanko (1995) argues that the police have not totally overcome their idea that domestic violence is not real crime.

Whether the police, when not attending domestic violence incidents, would be otherwise engaged in crime control and such 'real police work' is questioned in the literature. For instance, Stanko (1989) highlights research by Punch (1979), Reiner (1985) and Shapland and Hobbs (1989) which shows that most police work is about service provision and order maintenance[22]. Nonetheless, throughout the literature it is argued that police reluctance to intervene in domestic violence is based on police discretion exercised on the assumption that domestic violence is not 'real crime' and is thus not 'real police work'.

On ideas about the 'deserving victim', it is argued that women have to show they did not 'deserve' to be assaulted. Thus Hanmer, Radford and Stanko (1989) say that the protection the police offer to women is "...conditional upon women meeting police notions of 'deservedness'..." (1989: 6). These notions are based on assumptions about women in general, and wives and mothers in particular, and are determined by misogyny, racism, classism and heterosexism. Again, the Dobashes (1979) claim that police officers' ideas about 'appropriate' domestic relationships and about women and their role in society determine whether they deem women victims to be deserving of their assistance. Furthermore, it is argued that police perceptions, based on patriarchal assumptions, encourage police officers to value the family unit over the protection of women in their homes (Edwards 1989). Thus, Pahl (1985) says that where women are married or living with the offender there is less chance of an intervention grounded in

[22] See Hoyle (1998 ch. 1) for a discussion of the work of Robert Reiner and other colleagues in this context.

arrest because attending officers defer to the sanctity of the family (see Dobash and Dobash 1979; Stanko 1989).

Inherent in these arguments is an assumption that changes in operational rules can reduce discretion and lead to increased police intervention. Seemingly, feminist critics have believed that police actions can be directed (controlled?) by procedural rules, encouraging increased intervention grounded in criminal sanctions, and that policy direction can address how traditional 'cop culture' regards 'domestics', encouraging changes in operational policing (see Hoyle 1998).

Some researchers question the assumption that such policy initiatives can improve the position for domestic violence victims through 'improving' operational policing. Certainly, drawing on her research in the Thames Valley, Carolyn Hoyle questions this "...simplistic..." (1998: 210) assumption. According to Hoyle, though policies can influence police culture and thus influence police working assumptions, "...they cannot fundamentally change other working assumptions or working rules which contradict the recommendations of the policies..." (1998:15). Furthermore, some question the very idea that increased intervention grounded in criminal sanctions should be embraced (Stanko 1995; Hoyle 1998; Hoyle and Sanders 2000). Certainly, Hoyle (1998) questions whether women really want increased intervention grounded in more punitive police responses. Using her interviews with 39 victims of domestic violence, Hoyle argues that most women do not want arrest and prosecution, they want immediate protection – "...during interviews the women used the word 'protection' more than any other word in discussing both what they wanted and what they got from the police..." (1998: 194). Hoyle argues that "...many women did not mind whether the man was arrested or taken to another location as long as he was removed from the home..." (1998: 194). Hoyle and Sanders (2000) also argue that most women calling the police want their abuser removed. Using their interviews with 65 women in the Thames Valley, Hoyle and Sanders argue that "...most women who call the police wish to be separated, albeit sometimes temporarily from the offender. Arrest is sought by many of these women only if it is necessary to achieve their goal of temporary or permanent separation..." (2000: 22)[23].

[23] It is questionable, though, whether or not abusers can be removed *without* arrest. Certainly, in *Lewis .v. Chief Constable of the South Wales Constabulary* it was said that "...arrest is a matter of fact; it is not a legal concept...Arrest is a situation...Whether a person has been arrested depends not on the legality of this arrest but on whether he has been deprived of his liberty to go where he pleases..." [1991] 1 All ER 206 at 209-10.

Hoyle (1998) continues that, though some women interviewed did want an intervention grounded in arrest, they did not also want further criminal justice sanctions. Hoyle sets out women's reasons for not seeking prosecution – "...first, some women did not want to break up the relationship or the family unit; secondly, some were afraid of further retaliatory violence; and, thirdly, some did not think that the likely sentence would be worth the 'costs' incurred by the process..." (1998: 184). Hoyle and Sanders (2000) argue likewise that women see prosecution as onerous and unsatisfactory. Women in Hoyle and Sanders' (2000) research did not pursue prosecution because arrest had achieved the conditions women had sought. Other women did not pursue prosecution because "...the costs of prosecution outweigh, or are thought to outweigh its benefits..." (Hoyle and Sanders 2000: 23). Seemingly, women saw the main cost of prosecution as retaliation. They saw the benefits of prosecution to be questionable and many argued that their problems could not be addressed by the criminal justice system.

Carolyn Hoyle and Andrew Sanders' basic argument is that women should be empowered to make choices to establish conditions that will end the violence and are further supported in their choices "...whether these choices include invoking criminal justice intervention or not..." (2000: 19). Specifically, Hoyle and Sanders recommend that the victim and the police Domestic Violence Officer (DVO) together assess the victim's needs and wishes as regards the relationship, the violence *and the prosecution* – "...the question of whether or not to prosecute would follow on from the victim's assessment of the direction in which she wants her life to go. *The choice would be that of the victim*..." (2000: 32. Italics supplied).

Reflecting on this 'victim empowerment model', numerous points are raised that cannot be examined here. One important point, though, is that, ostensibly, Hoyle's (1998) and Hoyle and Sanders' (2000) discussions centre on *how far* the state should intervene in women's lives. Yet, their discussions are also instructive on *why* the state should intervene. Seemingly, Carolyn Hoyle and Andrew Sanders see that state intervention, here police intervention, does not in itself protect women – they see that it is what comes with that intervention that protects women. Hoyle and Sanders (2000) mirror, here, Stanko's broader questioning on "...why we still seek solutions to social problems through policing..." (1995: 31). More, they take issue with those arguing that it is through not intervening using arrest grounded in criminal justice sanctions that the police have not protected women. For Hoyle and Sanders (2000), it seems, it is not *giving women resources* when intervening that does not protect women. 'Resources', to

Hoyle and Sanders (2000), seems to mean the decision whether to arrest and prosecute. But resources means much more than this and this is what Hoyle and Sanders' (2000) discussions highlight. We can tease out of their discussions that the purpose of intervention in domestic violence is to give women resources.

Certainly, discussing 'crisis intervention' in the Domestic Violence Matters (DVM) model, Liz Kelly says:

> "...crisis intervention is directed towards enabling change at some level. 'At some level' is critically important here – change was not conceptualized by DVM solely in terms of leaving or taking legal action against a violent man. Rather it was much more fluid and variable; the basic requirement being *only* that it shifts the dynamics of power and control which underpin domestic violence in the woman's favour; ensuring that she had more resources after intervention than before it. This could be personal insight, strengthened resolve, accurate information, access to other agencies, or a firmer alliance with the criminal justice system; often it was a combination..." (1999: 16. Emphasis original).

Discussions that question the opinion that more police intervention means more and better protection centre on an assumption that "...the police do not, in and of themselves, empower..." (Stanko 1995: 39). Hoyle and Sanders' (2000) approach centres on an understanding that women need empowering to be protected – that with pro-arrest does not necessarily come protection. This is a more nuanced position on policing domestic violence and centres on the interaction between *support* and *safety*. Hoyle and Sanders' (2000) discussions are useful in highlighting this dialectic of support and safety – that women need supporting to be safe.

Perhaps the other point about Hoyle and Sanders' (2000) discussions is that they highlight that recent literature on policing domestic violence has been much less centred on 'interventionist' intervention and much more centred on 'holistic' intervention. Certainly, moving away from arguments encouraging police responses to domestic violence to be based on an interventionist approach grounded in criminal justice sanctions, more recent literature has argued that "...the role of legal sanctions in each case [should] vary from being central, marginal or completely irrelevant according to the particular circumstances of each individual victim..." (Hoyle and Sanders 2000: 33). Certainly, Hoyle (1998) argues that interventions should be "...tailored to the particular needs of each victim and her family..." (1998: 221). Likewise, Stanko argues that "...different women want different kinds of support..." (1995: 40) and that intervention services should be flexible – "...we must promote a variety of mechanisms that support women's own voices..." (1997: 634).

Before moving to the organizations that might represent these flexible intervention services, we can now examine whether the ideas seen in the development of the

literature on policing domestic violence have been mirrored at policy level. The policy direction embracing increased intervention that feminists had demanded began to emerge during the 1980s. The Home Office Circular of 1986 (No. 69), though concerned in the main with police responses to rape, contained recommendations about domestic violence and reminded police about new powers contained in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) which could be invoked when responding to domestic violence (see Morley and Mullender 1994; Hague and Malos 1998; Hoyle 1998). Policy initiatives developed at a local level, were followed at national level by the Home Office Circular of 1990 (No. 60).

The 1990/60 Circular set out comprehensive policy guidelines on policing domestic violence and encouraged a more interventionist approach to both police policy and practice. A central element was the assertion that police forces should develop policy grounded in an understanding that domestic violence is a crime as serious as other violent crime. It recommended that the police respond to domestic violence in the same manner as other such violent crime. The Circular advised the police that their main responsibility was to protect the victim and her children and warned them that reconciliation could be dangerous. The police were reminded that their powers to deal with domestic violence under the criminal law were extensive and were advised to consider arresting and charging the abuser where an offence had occurred. In addition, the Circular encouraged officers to be more sympathetic and understanding towards victims and provide them with information about assistance within the community. The 1990/60 Circular also encouraged a more *integrative* approach. Forces were encouraged to establish dedicated units to deal with domestic violence and to liaise with other statutory and voluntary agencies (see Morley and Mullender 1994). Officers within such Domestic Violence Units (DVUs) were to "...perform a more active role in supporting and reassuring the victim and helping her to make reasoned decisions, and [in] coordinating the work of the welfare and voluntary agencies..." as well as providing support for uniformed officers and ensuring that they were aware of their powers of arrest (Home Office 1990; see Grace 1995; Plotnikoff and Woolfson 1998).

Possibly, rather than simply mirroring them, the 1990/60 Circular was a response to ideas in the literature about policing domestic violence? Indeed, Hoyle has argued that there is no question the research by Edwards impacted on the Home Office when it was developing the Circular – "...even a brief perusal of the 1990/60 Circular indicates that the Home Office was influenced by Edwards' research..." (1998: 5). In contrast, others

have questioned whether the 1990/60 Circular was a response to feminist pressure, believing that it was instead based on police efforts to address their low credibility and assert surveillance and control in inner city areas (Southall Black Sisters 1989; Radford and Stanko 1991; see Stanko 1995). The recent revised Home Office Circular on policing domestic violence is clearer on this matter. According to its foreword, the Home Office Circular of 2000 (No. 19) "...reflect[s] changes in legislation since 1990 [and] *the findings of recent research* and current thinking on policy and practice..." (Home Office 2000. Italics supplied). The 2000/19 Circular repeats the 1990/60 Circular's encouragement that police policy and practice be more interventionist:

> "...the duty of police officers when attending a domestic incident is to protect the victim and children (if applicable) from any further violence. Where a power of arrest exists, the alleged offender should normally be arrested. An officer should be prepared to justify a decision not to arrest in the above circumstances. The second duty is to hold the offender accountable..." (Home Office 2000).

Further, "...there must be no suggestion that dealing with domestic violence is in any sense 'second-class' police work..." (Home Office 2000).

There is an argument, therefore, that police domestic violence policy has mirrored, and sometimes been shaped by, ideas in the literature. In contrast, more recent domestic violence developments seem to have occurred at policy level. Indeed, recent focus on preventing repeat domestic violence has occurred very much within the Home Office's crime prevention agenda[24]. In recent years, a substantial element within this Home Office crime prevention agenda has been the idea that crime prevention should be centred on repeat victimization[25].

The first crime prevention initiative centred on repeat victimization was the Home Office funded anti-burglary demonstration project on the Kirkholt housing estate in Rochdale during the mid-1980s (Forrester et al. 1988, 1990)[26]. Home Office funding was then obtained to apply ideas about repeat victimization and crime prevention to other crimes such as crimes against schools; violent racial crime; car crime; domestic violence – all were reported within the Home Office's Police Research Group (PRG)

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[24] This agenda started to emerge following the Gladstone Report of the Home Office Working Group on 'Coordinating Crime Prevention Efforts', published in 1980 (see Crawford 1998). At this time, the Home Office seemed to be recognizing the increased importance accorded to crime prevention and in 1983 established its own Crime Prevention Unit (Crawford 1998, 1999; see Gilling 1997).

[25] See Farrell (1992) for a full discussion of the literature on repeat victimization.

[26] Here it was found that, in 1986, the likelihood of being the victim of a second or repeat burglary was over four times as high as the likelihood of being the victim of a first burglary. Thus, the project concentrated prevention measures on those properties that had already been victimised. Repeat burglary was found to have declined by 80% during the seven months after implementation of the project compared with the seven months prior to implementation – within three years the rate of burglary on the estate had been reduced to 25% its original level.

Crime Prevention Unit Series (Farrell and Pease 1993; Sampson and Phillips 1992, 1995; Anderson et al. 1995; Lloyd et al. 1994). The report by Lloyd et al. (1994) documents a project in a Merseyside police division to prevent repeat domestic violence. A main preventative measure in the project was a rapid response alarm to provide special precautions to women for a limited time. A further four preventative measures were included – a computer database in the police control room; better communication of injunction details; the employment of a domestic violence prevention worker; and steps to increase awareness about domestic violence (Farrell et al. 1993; Lloyd et al. 1994). In a more recent project – the Domestic Violence and Repeat Victimization Project in Killingbeck, West Yorkshire – preventative measures were concentrated on both offender and victim (Hanmer et al. 1999). This project was also part of the PRG's (now Policing and Reducing Crime Unit) programme on repeat victimisation. The repeat victimisation project in Killingbeck aimed to reduce repeat victimisation through a three-tiered programme of interventions of increasing intensity based on repeat attendance (Hanmer and Griffiths 1998; Hanmer et al. 1999; Hanmer and Griffiths 2000). Hanmer and Griffiths (2000) list the project's 'key findings'. Seemingly, the three-tiered programme increased first time attendance from 60% to 85%; reduced repeat attendance; and increased the time intervals between attendance. Within five weeks, 9% of those requiring level one measures; 15% of those requiring level two measures; and 26% of those requiring level three measures were attended again. Nonetheless, it was predicted that 61% of those attended for a first time; 42% of those attended for a second time; and 36% of those attended for a third time would not be attended again[27].

Summarizing, perhaps the three most important points brought out in this section are, first, that Hoyle and Sanders' discussions tease out the interaction between support and safety; secondly, that in both the literature (and the policy) there has been a move towards a more holistic and integrated police response; and, thirdly, that, although police domestic violence policy has mirrored, and sometimes been shaped by, ideas in the literature, more recent domestic violence developments seem to have occurred in policy circles.

[27] As throughout this chapter, a full analysis of these repeat victimization projects cannot be presented here. Readers are encouraged to refer to Farrell et al. (1993); Lloyd et al. (1994); Hanmer and Griffiths (1998); Hanmer et al. (1999); Hanmer and Griffiths (2000).

6. Responses From Service Providers Revisited.

Let us now examine the organizations that might represent the flexible intervention services encouraged in some literature. Some such services centre on women with specialist needs based on their ethnic origin[28].

Black and Ethnic Minority Women.

First, provision for women with specialist needs based on their ethnic origin can be found within the refuge movement. Indeed, in her seminal 1989 text, 'The Hidden Struggle', Amina Mama sought to examine, inter alia, the support provided by the voluntary sector in London to black women experiencing violence in the home and found that the most extensive voluntary sector provision to black women experiencing domestic violence was the refuge movement – in most places refuges were the only provision. Discussing this refuge provision, Mama (1989) reports that, out of around 41 refuges in existence in London, seven were for black women. Six of these specialized in services for women from South-East Asia, though during the research one such refuge lost its funding and ceased to exist. Indeed, over the same research period, other research, which examined refuge provision in London, found that refuges specializing in providing services to black women were much under-resourced compared with other refuges (Russell 1989). Nonetheless, such refuge provision has increased over the years. Though Morley and Mullender said in 1994 that "...specialist black refuges have not yet been established in sufficient numbers to make escape a real option for many minority ethnic women..." (1994: 32), refuges for Asian, African, African-Caribbean, Latin American, and Chinese women can now be found throughout the country (Mama 1989, 1996; Mullender 1996; Hague and Malos 1998).

There is also increasing provision to black and ethnic minority women outside the refuge movement. Southall Black Sisters, which was established in 1979, provides crisis intervention and casework to Asian and African-Caribbean women, drawing on individual women's experiences. It has a resource centre which provides information; advice; support; counselling; and advocacy to women who have experienced domestic violence, as well as forced marriages, abductions, stranger and acquaintance rapes, and sexual harassment. Southall Black Sisters seeks to provide a comprehensive and

[28] It is not within the scope of this chapter to examine critically the services provided to black and ethnic minority women within general refuges or within specialist refuges – for a fuller discussion of these issues see Mama (1989, 1996).

holistic service to ethnic minority women – services are provided on, inter alia, issues such as racism, immigration and asylum, economic problems and mental health problems. Southall Black Sisters also campaigns to reform societal ideas, policy and practice (see Hague and Malos 1998; Mama 1996 Women's Unit 1999; Kelly and Humphreys 2000).

Other organizations also offer services outside the refuge movement to women with specialist needs based on their ethnic origin (see http://www.womensaid.org.uk). Most such organizations, though, are poorly documented, much less evaluated.

Outreach and Advocacy Programmes.

Other flexible intervention services centre on outreach and advocacy responses to domestic violence. Women's Aid and the refuge movement have been involved in developing outreach and advocacy, though such responses can now be found in other settings.

Two main points might be raised on outreach and advocacy in domestic violence. First, outreach and advocacy service provision is varied and pin pointing such provision is not easy. Interestingly, in recent Home Office papers on 'Reducing Domestic Violence What Works?' the Domestic Violence Matters project is discussed in one paper on outreach and advocacy approaches (Kelly and Humphries 2000) and in another paper on policing domestic violence (Hanmer and Griffiths 2000). Secondly, outreach and advocacy service provision is poorly documented. This is changing, though, since numerous programmes receiving Home Office Crime Reduction Programme[29] Violence Against Women funds centre on outreach and advocacy provision – these programmes are being evaluated through the Crime Reduction Programme (see http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/domesticviolence/crp.htm). 'Flag-ship' outreach and advocacy programmes that have been evaluated are the Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) and the Domestic Violence Matters project[30].

As well as evaluated programmes, other organizations provide outreach and advocacy responses. 'Refuge' is a national charity which emerged in 1993, the successor to the Chiswick Family Rescue which had broken from Women's Aid in 1975 (see Dobash and Dobash 1980). In addition to providing emergency and temporary accommodation to over 1,200 women and children each year through refuges, Refuge provides other

[29] See discussion below.

[30] Time considerations mean that neither the DVIP nor the DVM project can be discussed here. For a fuller discussion see Burton et al. 1998; Kelly and Humphreys 2000; http://www.dvip.org.

services to women: individual and group counselling for abused women; an outreach project for ethnic minority women; and a resettlement service providing emotional and practical support to women during and following their move-on from refuges. Refuge also provides services to children and has a children's programme, funded in part by the Department of Health. It also runs a domestic violence Helpline – the Refuge 24-hour National Crisis Line which has been established for 17 years and is available 365 days a year, taking around 20,000 calls each year (Women's Unit 1999).

Helplines, Community-Based Services and Drop-In-Centres.

In addition to the Refuge 24-hour National Crisis Line and the Women's Aid National Domestic Violence Helpline, the Home Office funded Victim Supportline, is available to all crime victims and was established in 1998. The Supportline provides information and support to victims of all reported and unreported crime, including those experiencing domestic violence (Women's Unit 1999). Helplines are also found at local level. Though, as with most outreach service provision, there is little documentation of, and information on, helplines, Humphries and Kelly see them as "...a key outreach initiative..." (2000: 3).

Other outreach responses are provided by community-based services and drop-in-centres.

Rape Crisis.

Like the battered women's movement, the 'rape crisis' movement has been grounded in the women's liberation movement (Anna T. 1988; Corbett and Hobdell 1988; Foley 1996; Zedner 1997). Rape crisis centres[31] emerged in America. The first rape crisis centre in Britain opened in London in 1976 and then in Birmingham in 1979. By 1988 there were 40 such centres in the United Kingdom and there are now 50 rape crisis centres in England and Wales alone (see Women's Unit 1999). Most rape crisis centres in Britain provide a 24-hour crisis and counselling telephone line; face-to-face counselling to women; and medical and legal advice. Throughout, the rape crisis movement has sought to increase public awareness about rape and has monitored and

[31] For a fuller discussion about rape crisis centres see London Rape Crisis Centre (1984); Anna T. (1988); Corbett and Hobdell (1988); Breckenridge and Carmody (1992); Gillespie (1994) Foley (1994, 1996) and Zedner (1997).

campaigned about service providers' responses to raped women (Anna T. 1988; Corbett and Hobdell 1988; Foley 1996; Zedner 1997).

In recent years, rape crisis centres and sexual abuse centres have been focused through the Rape Crisis Federation that was launched in October 1996 and provides "...resources to enable the continuance and development of Rape Crisis groups throughout England and Wales..." (http://www.rapecrisis.co.uk). Criticizing the term 'victim' and using the term 'survivor', rape crisis campaigners have differentiated their response from that of the rest of the victim movement (Zedner 1997), though the Rape Crisis Federation does see that "...most women and girls who have been or are being sexually abused, know their abuser in some capacity. He could be her father, husband, friend, workmate, neighbour, or other family member..." (http://www.rapecrisis.co.uk).

Victim Support.

Finally, services might be provided to women by Victim Support. Victim Support is a national, voluntary organization that began as a local initiative in Bristol in 1974 and has since expanded dramatically – there are now 386 Victim Support schemes and branches throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland and Victim Support assisted 1,141,198 victims during 1998/99 (see http://www.victimsupport.com). Victim Support works to enhance both understanding about victimisation and recognition of victims' rights and, in addition, to provide services at a local level to individual victims (Victim Support 1997; Zedner 1997). Local Victim Support schemes provide an outreach service to victims. On receiving details about certain crimes from the police, local volunteers contact victims, usually through letters, doorstep visits, or telephone calls, and offer a 'shoulder to cry on', practical services, and information (Zedner 1997; http://www.victimsupport.com).

Though Victim Support has, in the past, tended to focus on 'conventional victims' – those victimised by crimes committed by strangers such as burglary, robbery and theft – it now works increasingly with those victimised by sexual and violent crime, including domestic violence victims, and with the families of murder victims (see Corbett and Hobdell 1988; Zedner 1997; http://www.victimsupport.com; Maguire and Kynch 2000). Victim Support, nonetheless, recognizes Women's Aid to be the main organization working around domestic violence (Hague and Malos 1998).

Reflecting on who provides 'domestic violence services', then, research in the 1970s highlighted that numerous statutory agencies dismissed women's 'marital problems'.

These agencies' service provision seemed grounded in stereotypes and assumptions that deemed women themselves, not their abusers' violence, to be the problem. Seemingly, police service provision has become less dismissive and has assumed a more interventionist approach in domestic violence. Further, other agencies are increasingly recognizing that domestic violence is an issue and guidance on domestic violence service provision has abounded in recent times. As well as that mentioned in Chapter One, guidance to health practitioners has come from, inter alia, the Royal College of General Practitioners, the Royal College of Midwives, the British Association for Accident and Emergency Medicine and the Royal College of Nursing. These practitioners are increasingly told that:

> "...health services have a pivotal role to play in the identification, assessment and response to domestic violence..." (DoH 1999: para. 1.4).

Likewise, in May 1999, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, the Women's Unit and the Department of Health published guidance to assist local authorities in developing and implementing housing policies centred on 'relationship breakdown', including that caused through violence.

Nonetheless, most service provision on domestic violence remains concentrated in domestic violence organizations such as Women's Aid. 'Service provision on domestic violence', here, means service provision that is *represented as* a domestic violence service, as well as both *specialist* and *responsive* service provision. Assuming 'specialist' means encountering domestic violence day-to-day rather than in much broader service provision, not all specialist service provision is concentrated in domestic violence organizations – police DVOs being a case in point. Most specialist service provision is, though, undertaken by refuges, community support organizations, and outreach initiatives. Also, most responsive provision is concentrated in such organizations. Throughout, Women's Aid and the refuge movement has encouraged service provision to be grounded in women's expressed, not assumed, needs – in what women say they want, responsive service provision. Certainly, the Refuge Movement appeared as the Goldhawk Road Women's Liberation Movement Centre responded to one woman's (and then numerous other women's) need to use it as emergency, temporary accommodation.

So, service provision on domestic violence is focused on domestic violence organizations such as Women's Aid, refuges and other support organizations[32]. This is the most important point brought out in this section.

7. The Home Office Crime Prevention Agenda – Promoting Partnership.

Discussing policing domestic violence we saw that a substantial element within the Home Office's crime prevention agenda has been the idea that crime prevention should centre on repeat victimisation. Another increasingly significant element has been the idea that crime prevention should centre on *partnership*.

Policy Discourse 1980 and Onwards.

Beginning around 1980, the "...orthodoxy..." (Crawford 1999: 57) propounded in policy discourse regarding crime prevention is that the obligation to prevent crime is ever more diffuse – that a partnership approach is needed (see Morgan and Newburn 1997; Hughes 1998; Crawford 1998a, 1999; Gilling 1993, 1994, 1997, 2000). The thinking around which policy on crime prevention has become grounded is that numerous institutions, associations, organizations, communities, and individuals have considerable commitments regarding crime prevention. We begin to see policy discourse on crime prevention centred on a partnership approach in 1980 in the publication 'Co-ordinating Crime Prevention Efforts' (Gladstone 1980). Such discourse was seen again in 1984 when a joint Inter-Departmental Circular declared that:

> "...since some of the factors affecting crime lie outside the control or direct influence of the police, crime prevention can not be left to them alone. Every individual citizen and all those agencies whose policies and practices can influence the extent of crime should make their contribution. Preventing crime is a task for the whole community..." (Home Office et al. 1984).

Indeed, the 1984 Circular is seen to have been instrumental in propounding this partnership discourse at policy level (Morgan 1991; Bright 1991). The experimental Five Towns initiative followed, founded in 1986 and providing a centrally organized structure through which this crime prevention discourse could be advanced and delivered (see Morgan 1991; Bright 1991; Crawford 1998a). The Five Towns initiative was succeeded in 1988 by the more extensive Safer Cities Programme, which

[32] Clearly, one might question why such service provision is not undertaken in the statutory sector. Unfortunately, an examination of this question is outside the scope of this chapter. For a discussion of a similar issue in rape – the emergence of Sexual Assault Referral Centres – see Foley (1994, 1996) and Gillespie (1994).

represented the "...flagship of central government thinking on crime prevention..." (Crawford 1998a: 32) and took "...centre stage as the medium through which the crime prevention message was to be delivered..." (Crawford 1998a: 37, 1999; see Tilley 1992, 1993; Ekblom 1992; Sutton 1996; Hughes 1996). The policy discourse propounding a partnership approach to crime prevention increased in volume throughout the decade. In 1990 a second Inter-Departmental Circular was issued which extended the Circular 1984/8 message. The 1990 Circular was accompanied by a booklet – 'Partnership in Crime Prevention' (1990). This booklet specified six 'necessary elements' towards effective crime prevention initiatives: structure; leadership; information; identity; durability; and resources. Additionally, the booklet presented multi-agency initiatives deemed to be 'good practice' and discussed the basis of their 'success' – "...it was hoped that these examples of good practice would help crime prevention practitioners consolidate existing schemes and introduce fresh initiatives..." (Morgan 1991: 10).

The Home Office then gave a Working Group of the Standing Committee on Crime Prevention, chaired by James Morgan, responsibility for assessing the development of crime prevention since the 1984 Circular and for making recommendations for the future (Morgan 1991). The report produced by the Working Group, 'Safer Communities: The Local Delivery of Crime Prevention Through the Partnership Approach', generally known as 'The Morgan Report', is regarded as a significant juncture in the development of crime prevention through the partnership approach (Hughes 1996; Crawford 1998a, b, c, d, 1999). The Morgan Report (Morgan 1991) centres on an understanding that measures to prevent or reduce crime must not be regarded as an obligation to be undertaken by the police alone and must, instead, be the legitimate concern of all within the local community, including the police; the probation service; voluntary bodies and individuals; business organizations; and the local authority. On local government, Morgan believed that "...the local authority is a natural focus for coordinating, in collaboration with the police, the broad range of activities directed at improving community safety..." (1991: 19). Morgan proposed that the local authority, in conjunction with the police, be made responsible for developing a programme to improve community safety at local level. Specifically, the Working Group recommended that "...local authorities, working in conjunction with the police should have clear statutory responsibility for the development and stimulation of

community safety and crime prevention programmes, and for progressing at a local level a multi-agency approach to community safety..." (1991: 29).

Morgan's recommendations on multi-agency community safety and crime prevention enshrine "...a coherent structure in which the distribution of responsibilities between the parties is made clear and rendered comprehensible..." (Crawford 1998a: 39). Nonetheless, the Morgan Report was ignored by a Conservative government opposed to its main recommendations – especially the recommendation that local authorities be given statutory responsibility for the development and stimulation of community safety and crime prevention. This issue about the proper role to be assumed by local government in crime prevention and community safety, though, emerged again in 1996. In 1996, the joint local authority associations and the Local Government Management Board (LGMB) joined to publish four documents – a survey of activities; a 'position statement'; a manifesto; and a guide to good practice (ADC 1996; ACC 1997a, 1997b; see Crawford 1998a). The position statement propounded that "...local authorities should be given statutory responsibility for preparing and monitoring the implementation of a community safety plan for their local area in consultation with a range of local agencies..." (ADC 1996: 1).

In furtherance of the commitment it expressed to this recommendation when in opposition (see Labour Party 1997), on 2 December 1997 the Labour government published the Crime and Disorder Bill, which proposed, inter alia, that the statutory duty recommended by the Morgan Report be placed simultaneously on local authorities and the police. This Bill received Royal Assent on 31 July 1998 to become the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 is extensive and contains provisions addressing numerous matters, including promoting local action against crime and disorder[33]. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a statutory obligation on local authorities and the police to work, at a local level, with other key organizations and the community, to develop and implement a strategy to reduce crime and disorder in the local area. There is now a statutory obligation on police authorities, health authorities, and probation committees to co-operate in this work. The local partnership that is established must

[33] Card and Ward (1998) present a typology showing six main themes in the Act: tackling youth crime; combating anti-social behaviour and promoting local action against crime and disorder; reducing delay in the criminal justice system; tackling racist crime; protecting the public from sexual, violent and drug-misusing offenders; and providing greater consistency and clarity in sentencing.

first conduct and publish a thorough audit of crime and disorder problems in the local area – the Crime and Disorder Audit. During this audit process, the local partnership is to consider the opinions of those who live and work in the area. It is then to determine priorities for action and devise and publish a strategy – the Crime and Disorder Strategy – which addresses these priorities. This strategy is to have a three-year duration, beginning in April 1999. Finally, this new statutory duty is supported by a more general duty, imposed on local authorities, to consider the crime and disorder implications of their policy and practice – contained in section seventeen. Otherwise, the main provisions in relation to the audits and strategies are contained within the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in sections five and six[34].

A Home Office research programme has been examining problems and successes in implementing these new provisions, which came into force on 30 September 1998. The recent Home Office Pathfinders Report (1999) focuses on twelve Pathfinder areas in England and Wales and examines how each has experienced the implementation process. One Pathfinder area, Bradford, West Yorkshire is discussed in Appendix B. Further, the Home Office has conducted a national review of the audits and strategy documents produced by the 376 Crime and Disorder Partnerships in England and Wales (Phillips et al. 2000). This review has been based on 259 audits (69% of those produced) and 363 strategies (97% of those produced). Interestingly, as regards the different crime types specified in the strategy documents as priorities for action, the most common crime type specified is domestic violence, specified in 86% of strategies. Burglary is specified in 84%; drug related crime/drug misuse in 82%; vehicle crime in 80%; crime committed by young people in 77%; and disorder/nuisance/anti-social behaviour in 72%.

Essentially, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 represents the culmination of the discernable move in Home Office circles towards "...entrenching a partnership approach to the delivery of crime prevention..." (Crawford 1998a: 59).

We have seen how policy discourses propounding a multi-agency approach to crime prevention began to develop around 1980 and have developed since. We can now move to examine how the multi-agency approach to crime prevention began to develop at a *practical* level.

[34] Text of these sections can be found in Appendix A.

8. The Multi-Agency Approach at Practical Level.

Here, we can explore some early initiatives, discussed in some early studies about the developing multi-agency approach. We begin with "...the pre-eminent reference point for academic debate concerning the 'multi-agency' approach..." (Crawford and Jones 1995: 18) – Pearson and colleagues' research.

'Crime, Community and the Inter-Agency Dimension'.

Pearson and colleagues' (Blagg et al. 1988; Sampson et al. 1988, 1991; Pearson et al. 1989, 1992) Economic and Social Research Council funded research – 'Crime, Community and the Inter-Agency Dimension' – began on 1 November 1985 in four areas – a northern town, Milltown, and three areas in inner London[35].

Pearson and colleagues' discussions on multi-agency approaches have been grounded in a 'broad argument':

> "...that, at base, there is a fundamental set of conflicts between the state agencies we have focused on in our research...This structural conflict is either exaggerated or mediated by our other clear finding that there are structured power relations between the state agencies..." (Sampson et al. 1988: 478).

First, we can examine the assertion that there are deep structural conflicts in multi-agency settings and that "...conflict is, at the very least, always latent..." (Sampson et al. 1988: 482). Certainly, the Saxon Lane multi-agency initiative "...had been intended to foster more co-operative working relations..." (Pearson et al. 1992: 62). Nonetheless, it soon "...generated tensions between front-line workers..." (Pearson et al. 1992: 62). Housing officers believed that the police were using the initiative to off-load nuisances such as vandalism (not considered by the police to be 'real crime') onto other neighbourhood workers. Additionally, these housing officers were concerned that, through sharing information with the police about vandalism, suspected child abuse, burglary and thefts from meters, their present good standing in the community might be undermined and their own role subverted. Further, they believed their liaison with the police represented a "...one-way flow of information from us to them, with nothing in return..." (Blagg et al. 1988: 213). Seemingly, there were further tensions in dealing with Saxon Lane's problems. On the one hand, the local police regarded crime prevention to be situational and believed that funding should be directed towards providing stronger doors and stronger locks. On the other hand, the Chief Executive's

[35] In Milltown, the research was undertaken on the Saxon Lane estate and in the Oldtown area. In inner London, the research was conducted on the Queen's reach estate; the Empire Garden's estate; and in the Gabriel's Walk neighbourhood.

department sought a more 'social' approach with the establishment of 'residents' committees' – the police were concerned that this was not 'real' crime prevention and dismissed it as 'Playschool policing'.

Pearson and colleagues' second assertion is that these conflicting relations between state agencies are structured in terms of their power – that in struggles over conflicting interests, agencies do not have equal power. For Pearson and colleagues, this means that agencies might enthusiastically support a multi-agency initiative, set and dominate agendas and then withdraw from, or override it, regardless of the problematic implications for other agencies. These researchers discuss an instance on the Queen's Reach estate where the boundaries of the Home Beat Officer were changed without consultation and without informing the multi-agency initiative that such changes had occurred. Likewise, they discuss Gabriel's Walk in inner London where the police had undermined any gains made with local people and other agencies through a multi-agency initiative by dramatically increasing their profile in the area without warning other agencies in advance, meaning that social services were unprepared to receive extra children into care when parents were arrested.

Agencies taking autonomous decisions outside multi-agency settings might be based on a simple lack of multi-agency spirit rather than an agenda based on power. Nonetheless, though an agency might not want to assert an agenda based on power, where its decisions and actions can impact on other agencies it might be seen to have power. Possibly, a distinction can be made between agencies intending or seeking to assert an agenda based on power and those that, through the differential impact they have on other agencies, have power. Certainly, Blagg et al. (1988) argue that some agencies are more 'inter-connected' than others. They argue that, though autonomous decisions and actions by such agencies as the police can impact considerably on other agencies, this impact cannot usually be reciprocated and that, as such, significant power differentials exist between agencies. Likewise, Sampson et al. (1988) argue that, as regards the exercise of confidentiality, some agencies can impact differentially on others. They argue that "...problems of confidentiality abound..." (Sampson et al. 1988: 483) in multi-agency settings since agencies have differing conceptions and practices about 'confidentiality'. They point out that, though the police sometimes criticize demands made by social workers and probation officers regarding 'confidentiality', in the instance in Gabriel's Walk the police acted in accordance with their own ideas of confidentiality in maintaining an undercover operation that remained unannounced until

its implementation. Sampson et al. (1988) argue that the impact such autonomous police action had on others is clear and, further, that this impact was much greater than any impact produced by the confidentialities observed by social workers about their clients. Again, Sampson et al. (1988) do not seem to question whether, here, the police understood or appreciated the impact their exercise of confidentiality had on others or, indeed, whether they were concerned about it. In addition, they do not question whether the police intended to impact on others and determine their agendas in this manner. Nonetheless, they do show that, through their exercise of confidentiality, the police were able to impact on others and that, as such, there was differential power between them.

Thus, Pearson and colleagues believe that power differences exist between those involved in multi-agency settings where some are more inter-connected than others. In addition, they believe that instances such as that discussed on Gabriel's Walk, can be conceptualized with reference to Clarke et al.'s ideas about the 'structural subordination' of state social work to other agencies: "...social work derives its tasks and orientations from these other agencies; its operational world is permanently defined in relation to their policies and practices..." (1980: 182, cited in Sampson et al. 1988: 484). Sampson et al. argue that, through their dependency on other agencies (and thus their less powerful structural position), it is understandable that social service agencies have "...less legitimacy and less space for autonomous decision making..." (1988: 484).

Much of Sampson et al.'s discussion is focused on power and its significance in multi-agency settings – they especially seek to "...illustrate the extent of the power of state agencies through multi-agency approaches, and show how this power does have a very real effect on people's everyday lives..." (1988: 484). Sampson et al. (1988) discuss three examples in their research which, they argue, reveal extensive state dominance through the multi-agency approach.

First, "...there is the way in which crime is used by state agencies as an organising concept in a manner that is sometimes more divisive than cohesive, and often more to the detriment than improvement of the quality of life of some groups within a locality (Sampson et al. 1988: 485). Certainly, Sampson et al. discuss how some crime prevention separates and segregates people and discuss a high-technology (multi-agency) crime prevention scheme on the high-rise Queen's Reach estate. This scheme ensured that elderly residents were trapped inside a fortress of heavy doors, which they

struggled to open, and which were operated by electronic card-key devices, which they struggled to understand or use. Further, it ensured that neighbours were no longer able to 'keep an eye on' each other.

Sampson et al. argue, then, that because they have power, statutory agencies use crime as an organizing tool. Yet, they do not problematize this power. They do not problematize whether it is based on some agencies being more connected than others or on issues around structural subordination or on statutory status per se; whether other voluntary/community organizations have power to use organizing tools; or whether such organizations *could* have power to use organizing tools. There is a suggestion in Sampson and colleagues' arguments that *through using organizing tools* statutory agencies *gain* power. Once more, though, they do not problematize *crime* as an organizing concept. They do not problematize how crime per se comes to be an organizing tool and whether other organizing tools exist. Certainly, in the Queen's Reach example, Sampson et al. regard crime as the organizing tool but one could regard *neighbourliness* as another organizing tool.

The second example that Sampson et al. discuss to show state dominance through the multi-agency approach centres on the divisive assumptions that can be encountered within multi-agency crime prevention. These divisive assumptions – especially police assumptions about the local population – can sometimes determine which crime prevention initiative is invoked in the local area. Certainly, on Saxon Lane, police assumptions about an 'abnormal' population that committed 'own goals' (crime committed locally by the local population) ensured that Neighbourhood Watch was considered an unsuitable crime prevention measure. Indeed, Sampson and colleagues argue that, as regards Neighbourhood Watch, distinctions are made between respectable middle classes, who it is thought will co-operate with the police, and unrespectable working classes, who it is thought will not, and that ideas about 'respectability' tend to be based on police assumptions.

That divisive assumptions can determine crime prevention initiatives is a concern. Yet, it is questionable whether such assumptions are associated with multi-agency approaches que such – in numerous situations the police hold divisive assumptions and it is probable there would be stereotyping on 'respectability', multi-agency crime prevention initiative or not. Further, it is arguable that, rather than causing divisive assumptions, multi-agency approaches address them through presenting at least an opportunity to question others' ideas. Nonetheless, Sampson et al. argue that, in their

research, Neighbourhood Watch and other multi-agency crime prevention initiatives enhanced both stereotypical ideas about areas and local divisions – "...these schemes have added to already existing tensions within forums and between communities..." (Sampson et al. 1988: 486).

The third example that Sampson and colleagues discuss to show state dominance through multi-agency approaches centres on how 'crime' is defined in multi-agency initiatives. These researchers argue that it is the interests of more powerful agencies – statutory agencies such as the police service and housing department – that prevail in the definition of local needs and problems to the marginalization or exclusion of minority groups and interests[36]. Indeed, on the Empire Gardens estate, the police, familiar with arguments that crime is exacerbated by poor architectural design, joined with the housing department to form a very powerful union of interests that ensured other problems on the estate were marginalized. Certainly, though women's groups on the estate considered responses to domestic violence were problematic, these concerns were marginalized within the, police and housing dominated, definition of 'the problem' on the estate. Likewise, concerns about drugs were discussed in an initiative in Gabriel's Walk. Here, the black community was concerned about the high incidence of racial attacks and police policy on cannabis possession. Though the black community was well established in Gabriel's Walk and generally able to expound its interests, other ethnic minority groups concerned with the inadequacy of local language translation facilities and racial harassment found it hard to have their concerns heard. In contrast, white middle-class residents expressing concern about drugs and drug-dealing were supported by the police and joined to form a powerful union which ensured that these problems dominated discussion – "...a complex interweaving of power differentials in the Gabriel's Walk neighbourhood thus served to marginalize some of the most vulnerable sections of the community..." (Pearson et al. 1992: 61).

More specifically, Sampson and colleagues discuss how state agencies use crime as an organizing tool by 'talking up' local nuisances in order to secure funds for schemes that might have problematic outcomes for some local residents. Seemingly, a fracas outside a chip-shop on Saxon Lane became a 'riot' and thus a reason a multi-agency initiative was needed on the estate. Likewise, young people skateboarding was 'talked up' and thus a reason for the high-technology crime prevention scheme on Queen's Reach.

[36] Incidentally, Pearson and colleagues clearly see the police and housing departments as powerful. Interesting, though, it is usually the police's power that they illustrate using examples from their research.

Once more, Sampson et al. do not problematize this power to prevail in the definition of local needs and problems – again, whether this power is based on some agencies being more connected than others or on structural subordination and/or on statutory status per se. Possibly, some agencies are more able to talk up and/or dominate definitions through having more bodies around the table. Possibly, community and voluntary organizations might not succeed, should they seek to talk up because they have fewer resources with which to present 'their case'.

Pearson et al. found "...significant areas of difficulty..." around "...who defines the boundaries of a locality, its problems and its needs..." (1992: 58). Problems were encountered around how the 'local problem' came to be defined. On the Saxon Lane estate, disagreements about the multi-agency initiative's scope and purpose were compounded by further disagreements about its exact geographical boundaries. Further, while the relevant estate was known as 'Saxon Lane', the police referred to it as 'Cowmarsh'. Through such disagreements about its geographical boundaries and name, agreeing on Saxon Lane's 'problem' became somewhat problematic. Seemingly, several formulations of Saxon Lane's problems – crime; family poverty; vandalism; poor maintenance – were proposed.

Where there was agreement about 'what the problem *was*', there remained disagreement about just what it *involved*. Indeed, in each inner-London neighbourhood, though there was (tentative) agreement that there was a drugs problem, there remained disagreement about what this drugs problem involved – was it about law enforcement; health education; or the provision of treatment and rehabilitation services? Was it about illegal drugs; medically prescribed tranquilizers; or alcohol and tobacco? Indeed, Pearson et al. comment that, when concern was expressed about alcohol and tobacco, "...police representatives would visibly yawn – why should they waste valuable time pondering the health consequences of licit drugs..." (1992: 59). Again, Pearson et al. found that in inner-London problems with motor-cars were the focus for much discussion at police consultative group meetings. But, what was 'the problem'? For the police, it was theft of and from cars; for those representing local residents, it was the lack of police attention to illegal and untidy parking; for those representing local business, it was the excessive zeal of the police in dealing with parking offences. Sampson et al. comment that, here, there was an "...illusion of agreement..." (1988: 488) – though members appeared concerned with the same topic, disagreements endured about what the problem was. They comment further that "...in situations such as this there is no possibility

whatsoever of effective action, in that the preoccupations of different interest groups pass each other by like ships in the night..." (Sampson et al. 1988: 488).

Sampson et al. opine that attendees discuss different things but think they are discussing the same thing because workers are "...unable to comprehend other, 'alternative' viewpoints..." (1988: 488). They opine further that this incomprehension occurs because workers' perceptions about the 'local problem' are based on their own responsibilities and preoccupations and are impacted by professional ideologies and Pearson et al. see it occurring because the 'same' problem can impact differentially on each agency's workload. Though these explanations embrace an understanding that disagreements on 'the local problem' revolve around differing 'world views', Pearson and colleagues sometimes seem somewhat surprised by these disagreements and tensions around definitions.

Motivated by this discussion about disagreements about 'the local problem', Pearson et al. examine representation in multi-agency environments – how local areas are represented and how agencies themselves are represented in such environments. Pearson et al. propound that representation within the multi-agency approach is intrinsically reflective of "...competing 'sectional interests' within any given locality..." (1992: 60) and is, therefore, complicated and sometimes distorted. These sectional interests revolve around age, gender, race and ethnicity and can sometimes involve marginalized and unrepresented people and sections. The representative process is complicated in that no member involved in the multi-agency approach can represent all these sectional interests. Notwithstanding, some do purport to represent the whole 'community' – "...and even find their claims legitimized by state representatives, if they are saying what wants to be heard..." (Sampson et al. 1988: 489). The representational process becomes more complex when those representing certain sectional interests are not totally representative – indeed, Pearson and colleagues found in Empire Gardens that, though significant numbers of residents were of African-Caribbean descent, local systems of representation, such as the tenants' association, were almost exclusively white. More, they observe that, in the representational process, "...what tends to happen is that it is the 'respected' and 'respectable' community leaders, as identified and defined by the powerful state agencies, who participate in multi-agency forums..." (Sampson et al. 1988: 487).

Pearson and colleagues also report enormous confusion about how agencies themselves are represented in multi-agency approaches. Certainly, on the Queen's Reach multi-

agency initiative, attendees, concerned about service delivery following changes in the geographical boundaries of home beat officers, confronted the home beat officer sitting on the initiative. Yet, the officer echoed these concerns and responded that this was typical of his agency – he "...neither attempted to justify his agency's policy nor to argue the forum's case with his superior officers..." (Blagg et al. 1988: 215). Likewise, on the Queen's Reach, the housing department's renting policy was leading to very high rents and the initiative sought to encourage the housing representative to challenge the policy. Again, the housing representative was dismissive – "...you know what they're like, bureaucrats, they've no idea what it's like on the ground..." (Pearson et al. 1992: 65). The policy was never challenged, rents remained high and the matter was not discussed again. Though Blagg et al. argue that these instances show that members are not representatives que such, they do not examine what they were.

Blagg et al. argue, further, that the Queen's Reach initiative "...has become an end in itself, with members apparently taking the view that by simply sitting down together and reaching surface agreement on a number of issues this is something which will contribute to an improvement in the quality of life on Queen's Reach..." (1988: 215). Blagg et al. contend that, here, maintaining conflict free relationships has taken precedence over addressing areas of tension – when asked about how the multi-agency initiative has affected their working relationships, members responded that they are now on 'first name terms' with other members, who have become 'real people' to them and 'not just a voice on the other end of the telephone'. Pearson et al. propound that "...although the Queen's Reach forum met the needs of its members in terms of mutual support and encouragement, it remained highly questionable whether it was meeting the needs of the estate itself and its residents..." (1992: 64; see Blagg et al. 1988).

Another of Pearson and colleagues' research findings centres on "...the question of hierarchy: formality and informality..." (1992: 63) in multi-agency liaison. Pearson et al. confess that:

> "...there is a significant contradiction within our research evidence. On the one hand, informal systems of inter-agency working and information exchange are risky encounters which can endanger important confidentialities and might even sometimes constitute a threat to civil liberties. On the other hand, more informal and fluid systems of inter-agency relations seem to offer a more workable base for communication and negotiation. This contradiction remained an unresolved tension within our research, and more importantly in the theory and practice of the multi-agency approach to crime prevention and crime reduction..." (1992: 64).

On the formality versus informality question, Pearson and colleagues discuss the multi-agency initiative on the Queen's Reach estate. Here, "...members of a variety of agencies me[t] once a month in order to discuss common problems..." (Blagg et al.

1988: 215). Meetings usually had no pre-arranged agenda and were sometimes cancelled at short notice and, as they began, it was uncertain who would chair them. Yet, in the initiative "...there was a feeling that forum members gathered together as rounded human beings..." (Pearson et al. 1992: 64). Certainly, attendees discussed how "...their relationships with their counterparts in other agencies were on a much better footing..." (Pearson et al. 1992: 63) and it seemed the initiative gave attendees much personal satisfaction. Nonetheless, as seen, representational issues concerned Pearson and colleagues. Further, "...problems of informal inter-agency communication..." (Sampson et al. 1988: 491) abounded – "...there is certainly now a more flexible approach to information exchange between forum members, but even this is sometimes highly questionable in that it takes place on a case-by-case basis, with no over-riding policy to guide it, and in a manner that is sometimes highly unaccountable..." (Blagg et al. 1988: 216). Pearson et al. discuss the Queen's Reach initiative as a "...good example of the strengths and weaknesses of informal working practices..." (1992: 63). Nonetheless, these researchers never explain how it is that the multi-agency initiative on the Queen's Reach estate is deemed a 'good example' of liaison characterized as 'informal'. Is it because initiatives' meetings had no pre-arranged agenda and were sometimes cancelled at short notice? Is it because there were no 'formal systems of representation'? Pearson and colleagues' *implication* (but it is just implication) is that (in)formality in multi-agency approaches is determinative of and reflected in *procedures* and *ways of working* within multi-agency meeting settings themselves.

Finally, Pearson and colleagues found disjuncture between central and local government policy on the multi-agency approach and what happens 'on the ground'. Specifically, 'front-line' practitioners sometimes found the negotiation and implementation of policy conceived between agencies at chief-officer level problematic. Indeed, the joint police/housing department initiative on the Saxon Lane estate had been intended to foster more co-operative working relations and there seemed policy consensus on the need for such a joint-agency initiative. Nonetheless, 'frontline' personnel struggled to implement ideas conceived at 'chief-officer' level and the initiative soon produced tensions between workers based on the estate[37]. Likewise, the (chief-officer devised) high-technology crime prevention scheme on the high-rise Queen's Reach estate engendered numerous problems on implementation[38].

[37] See above.
[38] See above.

Seemingly, Pearson and colleagues found a tension between local – 'on the ground' – level and both central and executive levels. Such tension is seen in Alice Sampson's (1991) examination of the multi-agency approach in a Victim Support/Home Office Victim Support/Crime Prevention initiative.

Before moving to Sampson's (1991) examination, we can pull out the main points seen in Pearson and colleagues' (Blagg et al. 1988; Sampson et al. 1988, 1991; Pearson et al. 1989, 1992) discussions. One point is that conflict appears to characterize multi-agency approaches. Another is that there is differential power in the multi-agency approaches – that some agencies are more powerful than others and this power does "...have a very real effect on people's everyday lives..." (Sampson et al. 1988: 484). Seemingly, agreeing on the 'local problem' is not unproblematic in multi-agency approaches – where 'local' was, what the 'problem' was and how the problem was characterized were each problematic in Pearson and colleagues' research. Representation is sometimes rather muddled in multi-agency approaches. Seemingly, one can assume neither that those representing the community can or do represent nor that agency representatives realize "...what it means 'to be a representative of' their particular agency..." (Sampson et al. 1988: 489). One cannot assume that the multi-agency approach is a good thing as, as per Pearson and colleagues, it can obscure 'the problem' and become 'an end in itself'. (In)formality is important in examining multi-agency approaches, largely because it means information exchange is unaccountable. But how (in)formality might be conceptualized is an issue not seen in Pearson and colleagues' research. Finally, one cannot assume, as per Pearson and colleagues, that organizational heads' plans on multi-agency approaches are easily put into practice on the ground. Interestingly, this issue is seen in research a decade before the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 demands just that.

Victim Support and Crime Prevention in an Inner-City Setting.

Alice Sampson discusses a joint National Association of Victim Support (NAVSS) and Home Office Crime Prevention Unit (CPU) victim support/crime prevention initiative, based in a 'hard-to-let' inner-city local authority housing estate and operative between August 1988 and July 1990 (Sampson and Farrell 1990; Sampson 1991). This initiative sought to "...give victims of all types of crime and harassment emotional and practical

support and to reduce crime through work with victims..." (Sampson and Farrell 1990: 1; see Sampson 1991). Its objectives were devised by the CPU and NAVSS[39].

The multi-agency working group that was convened was to "...assist in the implementation of the aims of the project and to deliver a more coordinated range of services to the estate..." (Sampson 1991: 13). Indeed, it was believed that a multi-agency working group would have "...a catalytic role...to forward the aims of the project..." (Sampson 1991: 16), by enabling agency workers to exchange information and to present their own agencies' policies and perspectives and to learn about other agencies' roles and organization. It was additionally believed that a multi-agency working group would be a setting where common problems shared by those living on the estate could be revealed towards exposing gaps in services and developing new initiatives to address them. In her 1991 report Alice Sampson discusses this multi-agency working group, drawing on her observations of working group meetings and interviews conducted with 16 group members.

Sampson reports that twelve agencies were represented on the multi-agency working group. Seemingly, Sampson sees this as problematic as she recommends that "...a small 'core' working group with approximately six members may be more suitable for a multi-agency approach..." (1991: 16). Those representing some organizations – social services, the probation service, the transport police, and the tenants association – changed over the initiative's duration, though Sampson does not examine why this happened or how it was experienced. Regarding attendance at working group meetings, Sampson reports that attendance was sometimes modest, observing one meeting that was attended by only victim support and the social services community worker. In addition, it seems that attendance was generally inconsistent – Sampson observed that only the local Victim Support co-ordinator attended each of the 18 meetings. The police, represented by a beat officer or a community involvement officer, attended 15 meetings; the tenants' association attended 14 meetings; the social services community

[39] They were, to make contact with the victims of crime and to offer emotional and practical support including crime prevention advice; achieve a reduction in the fear of crime; encourage self help and networking between neighbours; and encourage the prevention of crime (Sampson and Farrell 1990, Sampson 1991). Practical aims were devised by the Victim Support Management Committee as a means of implementing the initiative's general objectives. Two part-time Victim Support project workers, mandated to implement these aims, took post in July 1988. The project workers were managed on a day-to-day basis by the local Victim Support co-ordinator and the initiative was managed by the local Victim Support Management Committee. Throughout the initiative, the CPU and NAVSS retained managerial involvement through meetings with the Victim Support coordinator and the Victim Support Management Committee. Funding was provided by the CPU and NAVSS – the NAVSS funded the project workers' salaries and the CPU funded the research conducted by Sampson and Farrell (Sampson and Farrell 1990; Sampson 1991).

worker attended twelve meetings; and neighbourhood housing managers attended eleven meetings.

Those attending the least were the NAVSS, represented at nine meetings; the probation service, represented at eight meetings; the transport police, represented at six meetings; and a representative from a neighbouring estate attended just three meetings. Finally, the local authority under-5s management representative attended five meetings and the local authority police support unit attended just two meetings. Again, though, Sampson does not examine why some meetings were poorly attended or why some agencies were poor attendees or, indeed, what this meant and how it was experienced. Perhaps poor and changing membership is an issue in all multi-agency approaches?

Seemingly, the working group had both 'formal' and 'informal' levels. The formal level comprised the meeting setting. Commenting on this setting, Sampson reports that three phases could be seen throughout the initiative's duration. In the first phase, meetings seemed to be dominated by 'background' – background to the initiative; the victimization/crime prevention survey that had been conducted on the estate; and the aims proposed. Sampson observes that, when such background was presented, representatives did not engage in discussion and accepted the proposed aims without question. The implication in Sampson's observation is that acceptance without discussion and question in this manner is problematic, though no explanation about it is examined. A second phase within working group meetings could then be seen, dominated by two agendas. On the one hand, there were immediate concerns expressed by residents. These concerns were usually about the car – speeding; illegal dumping; disruptive parking; disorderly children and youths; and 'problem' families. On the other agenda, were concerns about the initiative and its progress – about problems encountered by workers in implementing the aims and about how these problems might be resolved. Concerns expressed on both agendas, Sampson reports, tended to remain unresolved or were resolved only when much time had passed. Sampson reports that the final six months heralded the third phase within the working group's evolution. During this phase, discussion was focused on the future. Rather than centring on residents' immediate concerns and the project's progress, discussions within meetings centred on the future of the project; the consequences for residents should the workers withdraw; and how to continue the project when the funding finished.

The informal level comprised "...the time before and after the meetings..." and "...provided the opportunity for exchanges of information and gossip which included

reporting crimes to the police and discussing clients...." (Sampson 1991: 13). Seemingly, a further 'informal' level comprised multi-agency liaison *past* the meeting setting. Sampson discusses how "...group members contacted each other outside the meetings. These contacts were mostly to exchange information about clients or to ask for assistance..." (Sampson 1991: 15). Likewise, Sampson discusses how "...if there were any problems crucial to the continuation of the project then the chair of the [working] group (the victim support co-ordinator) arranged a meeting or made a telephone call to senior management independently of the working group. Her numerous personal contacts were key channels through which things 'happened'. For example, meetings were held with senior police to try and resolve referral problems, and telephone calls were made to the senior housing personnel about the installation of the intercom system..." (1991: 14). Sampson never problematizes the formal/informal levels seen in this initiative or the seeming informal level that centred on the Chair's multi-agency liaison past the meeting setting. This is unfortunate since Sampson's conceptualization of informality appears to differ from Blagg and colleagues (seeming) conceptualization that (in)formality is determinative of and reflected in procedures and ways of working within multi-agency initiatives themselves.

In addition to observing the working group setting, Sampson conducted interviews with 16 members of the group. She questioned agency workers about their role within the group and how it related to their own organization; their opinions about how the group had performed; and their opinions about the project. Members reported having joined the working group because it was part of their job. The initial meeting was the first time most members had met. All those interviewed, with one exception, considered that meeting other group members had increased their knowledge and, as such, had benefited their own work and had especially benefited their clients. Most "...raised the issue of conflict within the group..." (Sampson 1991: 15) and confessed to finding it disruptive and unsettling.

Other than supporting and advising project workers, most working group members were generally uncertain about what their contribution to the meetings had been. Statutory agency representatives, especially the local housing authority and the police, believed that a significant element within their role at meetings was to propound their agency's perspective and to outline both their statutory responsibilities and their limitations. Others were less clear – those who had replaced a colleague or joined the group at some point in its duration were the least certain about both their role and their contribution.

Sampson opines that members' uncertainty about their role was based, to an extent, on the isolation they experienced in their own organization. Many questioned by Sampson believed that their own work was considered marginal within their own organization and this "...credibility gap limited the importance given to the project..." (1991: 15). Indeed some representatives reported that they were sometimes not given time to attend project meetings and that, where decisions were referred back to senior managers, they either did not respond or took considerable time to respond. This isolation and marginalization is somewhat unexamined by Sampson so it is unclear whether she means that such isolation happens where the work undertaken within the multi-agency working group, victim oriented crime prevention in this initiative, is marginalized and that those interested in such marginalized issues will necessarily be isolated or whether she means that, through becoming involved in the multi-agency working group, members become isolated within their own organizations. Perhaps Sampson's observation cannot be dichotomized in this manner and it will depend on the issue and initiative in question.

Finally, Sampson reports that those members of the working group questioned expressed a concern that the Home Office and NAVSS had exceeded their 'decision making power'. We cannot examine these concerns – Sampson presents no explanation about the circumstances or manner in which the CPU and NAVSS had exceeded their power or were believed by members to have exceeded their power. Indeed, no explanation is presented about just what such 'decision making power' involved or was believed by members to involve. Nonetheless, those members of the working group questioned believed themselves to be powerless regarding both decision making and management within the initiative – members believed that CPU and NAVSS interests and demands would take precedence over working group decisions and that working group ideas and decisions would be disregarded by project workers. These concerns could present an explanation to Sampson's observation, mentioned above, that the working group did not discuss or question the initiative when initially presented with background about it – through believing themselves to be essentially powerless, acceptance without discussion and question by working group members in this manner might have been expected.

Through these concerns about perceived decision making by the CPU and NAVSS, and indeed the project workers, relative to the working group's own perceived powerlessness, it is possible to see real tension between the working group and both the

senior management structure and the local project workers within the initiative. Further, such tensions between the working group and the senior management structure could be indicative of more general central/executive level tensions – tensions between the working group and the local project workers could be indicative of more general executive/local level tensions. Indeed, in other observations reported by Sampson we see such general level tensions. First, tension between central and local level is seen in discussions about CPU and NAVSS interest in the initiative. CPU interest in the initiative was based on reducing crime; NAVSS interest was about service provision to victims (Sampson and Farrell 1990; Sampson 1991). These contrasting interests engendered a divide between the initiative's crime prevention and victim support objectives – Sampson reports that project workers would discuss 'our work for the Home Office', meaning the crime prevention work, and 'our work for the National', meaning giving emotional and practical support and assistance to victims. More, these contrasting interests ensured that "...the workers and the victim support coordinator felt as if they were being pulled in different directions by NAVSS and the CPU..." (Sampson 1991: 3). Sampson reports that this lowered workers' morale and enthusiasm for the initiative – contrasting interests at central level thus served to engender problems and difficulties for those working at local level and, by extension, those at local level at whom work was being directed.

Such tensions between central level interests and local level needs can be seen again when Sampson reports "...tension between [the] aims of the project and [the] current problems of the residents was a recurring theme..." (1991:18). Indeed, throughout the initiative's duration, there was a tension between, on the one hand, developing and undertaking the initiative's centrally determined aims and, on the other hand, responding to the immediate problems, such as fires in residents' letter boxes or children playing on roof tops, encountered at local level by those living on the estate. This tension involved an additional tension between executive and local levels within the initiative – though immediate problems were encountered, there was no scope at executive level, within the multi-agency group, to discuss or respond to them. Indeed, Sampson recommends that there be such scope in order to "...give the project more credibility with the residents..." (1991: 17). This tension between executive and local level is seen again in Sampson's discussions about domestic violence and racial tension within the initiative. Sampson reports that, notwithstanding the victimization survey, conducted on the estate, which exposed extensive domestic violence and racial tension (see Sampson and Farrell 1990), when each was initially raised within the initiative's

working group "...the tenants' representative did not think these were a problem [and] as with other inter-agency groups these remained 'silent issues'..." (1991: 14). Again we see a tension between interests expressed at an executive level and problems and needs experienced at a local level.

In examining this observation that domestic violence and racial tension were 'silent issues', and indeed in examining Sampson's observations throughout, we see a more general point. The 'silence' reported could be based on there being no women's organizations or ethnic minority organizations in the working group or, more, on the thinking that an initiative with a crime prevention agenda should not be concerned with issues such as domestic violence and racial tension. Indeed, we see this thinking in Sampson's report that, although it was intended that the initiative's project workers provide every victim of reported or unreported crime or harassment with crime prevention advice, where victim and assailant were known to each other, "...the workers did not feel that crime prevention advice was appropriate..." (1991: 8). These observations could centre on the multi-agency group here being intended to implement a certain victim support/crime prevention initiative. The more general point being that Sampson's observations throughout the report could just be associated with multi-agency groups so intended – Sampson does not examine whether her observations could be associated with the multi-agency approach to crime prevention per se[40].

Notwithstanding, Sampson's observations about the multi-agency working group here have brought out points about the multi-agency approach to crime prevention. Sampson's discussions add to Pearson and colleagues' discussions as regards who attends multi-agency initiatives, when they attend and why they attend. On when agencies attend, it seems that attendance on multi-agency initiatives is not guaranteed – some agencies might not attend or might attend inconsistently. Another main point raised is that consistent representation is not guaranteed – that people representing attendees might change. On why attendees/representatives attend, a main point raised in Sampson's discussion is that some *did not know*. Sampson's discussions also add to Pearson and colleagues' discussions as regards what happens when attendees are not sitting around the multi-agency table.

[40]It is conceded that such an examination was never within Sampson's scope. She intends that the discussion presented in her paper, about this initiative, advances the more general debate about community crime and fear prevention schemes – especially "...how to overcome...difficulties and achieve tangible results..." (Sampson 1991: 1) rather than the debate about the multi-agency approach to crime prevention per se.

Seemingly, one cannot assume that multi-agency initiatives attendees are 'main-players' in their agencies – as per Sampson, such attendees face marginalization in their agencies. One can assume, though, that initiatives *increase* attendees' interaction outside meetings – though most attendees had not met before, since attending they contacted each other increasingly. Another point is that (in)formality is important in examining multi-agency approaches. How (in)formality might be conceptualized is a point that Sampson's discussion brings out. Seemingly, informality is conceptualized as the time outside and/or before/after the meeting setting. The same point is raised in Sampson's discussions as in Pearson and colleagues' that the multi-agency approach can become an 'end in itself'. Certainly, Sampson found that initiative discussions centred on the initiative rather than the local people – in the phases seen, residents' concerns and problems comprised only one agenda (out of two), seen in one phase (out of three). One cannot assume that organizational heads' plans on multi-agency approaches are easily put into practice on the ground. Central/executive tensions are seen in such approaches. Finally, the point is also raised that *just some* define problems and solutions. Sampson does not explain this as centred on power and sees it as centred more on central/executive/local tensions, but her discussions nonetheless raise the point that certain definitions prevail in multi-agency approaches.

The Inter-Agency Crime Prevention Research Project.

The Inter-Agency Crime Prevention Research Project commenced in September 1990 and aimed to examine where multi-agency crime prevention was operative and to examine and assess approaches to crime prevention in these areas in a "...detailed and focused manner..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a: 2). The first phase of the research was undertaken by Mike Nellis and Jill Enterkin and was reported by those researchers to the Morgan Group. The second phase of the research was undertaken by Mark Liddle and Lorraine Gelsthorpe (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a, 1994b, 1994c). During this phase, all those involved in multi-agency initiatives in eight main research areas were interviewed and in several other areas interviews were conducted with one or two selected individuals – around 100 participants in multi-agency initiatives were questioned (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a). The first report presented by Liddle and Gelsthorpe (1994a) is concerned with structure, co-ordination, and leadership in multi-agency crime prevention.

Throughout their research Liddle and Gelsthorpe examined local crime prevention structures. 'Structure', to Liddle and Gelsthorpe, essentially means 'organizational

arrangements' – a multi-agency structure involves "...working arrangements in place that will allow for liaison, co-operation, information sharing, and co-ordination of [the] crime prevention activities..." (1994a: 6). Much discussion presented by Liddle and Gelsthorpe about such organizational arrangements concerns levels of formality within them. Liddle and Gelsthorpe report much variation regarding the level of formality observed in multi-agency structures, "...with some [areas] having multi-agency arrangements that were both complex and highly specified, and others described more in terms of informal liaisons between particular individuals from different agencies, in the absence of any clearly documented role or mandates..." (1994a: 7). Though again observing variation, Liddle and Gelsthorpe observed that more formal structures usually involved, in a central role, a multi-agency group which:

- was designated as a multi-agency crime prevention group;
- comprised individuals, themselves designated as agency or organization representatives;
- met periodically as a group;
- maintained records of its own activities; and
- liaised with other elements within a structure, such as a co-ordinator or a multi-agency group in place at other levels.

Those questioned by Liddle and Gelsthorpe generally favoured more informal structures. Whether those questioned had an understanding about 'informal structures' comparable to each other, or indeed comparable to Liddle and Gelsthorpe, is never examined. Certainly, Liddle and Gelsthorpe do not conceptualize informality – one assumes they see informal structures as those without a 'designated multi-agency group'.

Liddle and Gelsthorpe propound that "...the fluidity of informal multi-agency arrangements can in some cases allow for quick action on the ground..." (1994a: 8) and as such can be advantageous. They report that those questioned discussed instances where "...a coordinated multi-agency response to particular local events..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a: 8) was effected quickly through being initiated over the telephone and through using existing informal networks, without having to be considered on a formal agenda. Notwithstanding, Liddle and Gelsthorpe report that this fluidity can make informal multi-agency arrangements less durable and as such can be disadvantageous. This is especially seen by them where membership and key personnel within such arrangements change. Liddle and Gelsthorpe opine that because informal multi-agency arrangements are based on individual, rather than organizational, liaison such arrangements will tend to be more vulnerable when membership and key personnel change but more formal multi-agency structures are "...perhaps better able to remain in

place..." (1994a: 9) when members and key personnel are lost. This is evidenced, according to these researchers, by reports by those questioned that their position on a multi-agency group was 'inherited' from a predecessor or that such a position 'came with the post' – "...formal structures can have the advantage of being relatively self-sustaining in this way..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a: 9).

Though Liddle and Gelsthorpe concede that, when personnel are lost, formal structures "...may change their focus, or style of decision-making, and so on..." (1994a: 9), it is somewhat assumed by them that the main concern here is whether such structures are sustained. Past this concession, Liddle and Gelsthorpe never examine how losing personnel is *experienced* within formal multi-agency structures and it is assumed by them that concerns about lost personnel are related only to discussions about durability. More, they assume that structures being sustained by positions coming with the post is essentially a 'good thing' – they never examine whether self-sustainment in this manner could be problematic. Finally, Liddle and Gelsthorpe dichotomize possibilities between formal multi-agency structures, which will be sustained when personnel are lost, and informal multi-agency structures, which will not be sustained. Perhaps, this dichotomy might not hold – it might be that some formal structures could *not* 'remain in place' when personnel are lost and that some informal structures *could* 'remain in place' when personnel are lost.

Liddle and Gelsthorpe observe that representatives involved in informal multi-agency arrangements have to wear five or six 'different hats' and, as such, that these arrangements can "...involve a certain degree of 'boundary blurring' across agencies..." (1994a: 9). More specifically, "...it can be argued that a balance between the need for 'inter-agency co-operation' and the need for adherence to jurisdictional constraints which are in some cases highly justified, is more difficult to maintain in informal inter-agency liaisons..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a: 9). Further, Liddle and Gelsthorpe argue that with boundary blurring come issues of accountability. These issues, they believe, are especially seen in informal information sharing, which "...because it is not governed by specific agreements between agencies about jurisdiction or responsibility, is essentially left to the judgement of the individuals involved. Participants whom we questioned about this aspect of multi-agency work typically suggested that information sharing across agencies in such conditions is governed by 'professional common sense', but ...[sometimes] this has given rise to extreme difficulties..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a: 10).

Here, Liddle and Gelsthorpe again dichotomize between informal arrangements, involving boundary blurring, and formal arrangements, involving no such blurring. But, does this dichotomy hold – does boundary blurring come, necessarily, with informality; does it come *only* with informality; does it come with formality too; does it come in *all* multi-agency liaison? Again, perhaps, this dichotomy might not hold – it might be that boundary blurring does not come, necessarily, with informality or that it does not *only* come with informality. It might be that boundary blurring comes in *all* multi-agency liaison.

Indeed, in much observation by Liddle and Gelsthorpe, through their endeavour to present "...the relative merits of formal and informal multi-agency crime prevention structures..." (1994a: 8), we see them dichotomize in this manner and we see this inclination towards an 'either/or' discussion – a theme is 'either' seen in informal structures 'or' in formal structures. Such dichotomizing is regrettable[41].

Moving to their observations about co-ordination, Liddle and Gelsthorpe propound that "...crime prevention work in the absence of co-ordination can be both wasteful and ineffective..." (1994a: 17). Though Liddle and Gelsthorpe believe that co-ordination need not be provided by a crime prevention co-ordinator, those questioned favoured such provision. In the research areas without a crime prevention co-ordinator, much co-ordination work was undertaken by the chair of the multi-agency group. Other multi-agency groups examined by Liddle and Gelsthorpe seemed to divide co-ordination work between the group according to how the work in question related to each representative's workload or interests or to rotate the 'co-ordinator's hat' at certain times. Just what such co-ordination could, or indeed should, involve is never examined. The implication in their discussion is that it could, and indeed should, involve some harmonizing of the policies and procedures of member agencies and organizations – involving more specifically "...following up activities between meetings, visiting work sites, arranging for distribution of documents or minutes, assembling information bases, telephoning group members for rapid feedback, decisions, or reports on work in progress, 'trouble shooting' for the multi-agency group..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a: 17). Indeed, Liddle and Gelsthorpe report that, in the research areas, co-ordination was sometimes rather *ad hoc*. Observing that those involved in multi-agency crime prevention groups reported that devoting much time to the group between

[41] It should be mentioned that, in their discussion of structures, Liddle and Gelsthorpe (1994a) do give consideration to the question of multi-levelled structures and, as such, their discussion is not entirely based on the formal versus informal question.

meetings was problematic, Liddle and Gelsthorpe wonder whether such *ad hoc* co-ordination was to be expected.

Finally, though chosen with comparison in mind, the areas examined by Liddle and Gelsthorpe showed much variation around leadership – some were regarded locally to be probation led, some to be police led. 'Leadership', though, appeared to Liddle and Gelsthorpe to be rather complex and is seen by these researchers and, indeed those involved in multi-agency initiatives, to be based on "...a number of factors such as co-ordination, resourcing, staff provision, or simply the fact that one agency rather than another 'took the initiative' to create a multi-agency crime prevention group or to provide a 'base' for the crime prevention work..." (1994a). Liddle and Gelsthorpe observe that, within the multi-agency initiatives examined, leadership, however seen, was usually not static – rather, it tended to move according to work undertaken. More, some initiatives observed endeavoured to avoid leadership or lead agencies "...in favour of 'partnership' or some other euphemism for shared ownership and control of the work..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a: 19).

Indeed, some multi-agency initiatives were observed to rotate the chair in order to avoid the idea that the crime prevention work was led or owned by one agency; others insisted that multi-agency initiative logos and letterheads be used in correspondence; and in others some representatives, especially police representatives, endeavoured to 'take a back seat' in order to further an initiative's 'corporate aims'. Liddle and Gelsthorpe warn, though, that there remain "...numerous schemes in existence which do reflect the strong lead of particular agencies in terms of co-ordination, staffing, resourcing and other support..." (1994a: 21). Finally, Liddle and Gelsthorpe's implication (they do not make it explicit) is that leaders in crime prevention partnerships 'drive' the 'shape and direction of the work' done.

In a second paper, Liddle and Gelsthorpe undertake to both examine "...relation (sic) between agencies..." and outlin[e] some typical forms of agency participation..." (1994b: 1) in multi-agency initiatives. However, their discussion is focused on agency 'participation' in multi-agency initiatives. Basing their typology on that seen in Liddle and Bottoms' (1991, 1994) retrospective Five Towns assessment, they typologize agency participation into 'prime mover'; supportive passenger'; 'sleeping partner';

'obstructor'; 'agency spy'; and 'proselytizer' participation[42].

Some 'prime movers' were seen but less so where the multi-agency group had become "...an ineffective (and under-resourced) 'talking shop'..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994b: 9). The 'supportive passenger' was the most common participation pattern seen by Liddle and Gelsthorpe. Those responding to Liddle and Gelsthorpe's questioning reported that 'sleeping partner' participation was common and, in most areas, were "...able to single out particular agencies which, although they were officially 'on board', were fairly invisible in the actual multi-agency work..." (1994b: 9). Such 'sleeping partners' tended to be those 'designated agency representatives' where "...the designation seems not to have been accompanied by any clear explanation about why the participation was thought necessary..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994b: 10). We saw above that those questioned by Sampson (1991) reported that involvement in the multi-agency initiative was part of their job and, more, that this was experienced as positive. We see here, assuming that 'designated agency representation' is synonymous with involvement being part of a job, that such involvement could engender more problematic experiences.

Liddle and Gelsthorpe report that 'obstructors' were uncommon in their research. Additionally, though these researchers question whether those observed could be regarded as 'agency spies', it is conceded by them that some members believed that their participation was based on a 'monitoring role' and, further, that some members believed their involvement presented a opportunity to publicize their agency's perspective and, as such, were 'proselytizers'.

Liddle and Gelsthorpe continue their discussion of agency 'participation' and discuss "...specific groups/agencies and their contributions..." (1994b: 11)[43]. Seemingly, in most areas researched, the police were "...involved in the initial creation..." of the multi-agency initiative and, in much multi-agency crime prevention, the police assumed a "...central role..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994b: 12). The police did not necessarily

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[42] *Prime movers* - took on a large share of the project's workload, and made significant efforts to uncover resources or staff time for the crime prevention activities; *supportive passenger* - offered vocal support for project work, but little or nothing in the way of material or staff support; *sleeping partners* - attended meetings, but offered neither vocal support nor real assistance with the work; *obstructors* - were neither supportive nor silent about project activities, but made their participation visible as opposition to the work of the project; *agency 'spies'* - regarded their own participation as being a kind of 'reconnaissance' exercise, where the aim was to monitor (for one reason or another) the activities of other agencies; and *proselytizers* - regarded their own participation as being an opportunity primarily to publicise the purposes or activities of their own group or agency..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994b).

[43] As will be discussed much later in the thesis, Liddle and Gelsthorpe (1994a) are not alone in conflating ostensibly different notions like participation and contributions.

assume a 'prime mover' role and, in some areas, perceived themselves to be 'equal partners'. Sometimes the police showed a "...commitment to 'partnership principles'..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994b: 12) and determined to take a less active role than they believed themselves capable of. Such a "...perceived sacrifice of power in the interests of inter-agency cooperation..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994b: 12) was not unusual, though was not universal.

Liddle and Gelsthorpe report that, though in most areas researched local authority representatives composed a majority of 'participants' in the multi-agency initiative and they "...were impressed with the impact that the direct involvement of local authority Chief Executive could have on the profile and functioning of multi-agency crime prevention groups..." (1994b: 14). In some areas, though, local authority participation was ad hoc and sometimes rather disinclined. Local authority social service departments' participation was especially passive, with them assuming what appeared to Liddle and Gelsthorpe, and indeed to other members, to be a 'silent partner' role in much multi-agency crime prevention work. On occasions social services were seen to take a "...strong lead..." on certain initiatives, especially those around young people. In contrast, some social services representatives confessed to being unsure about their intended role on multi-agency crime prevention initiatives. Others confessed that "...involvement was not a priority..." – indeed, "...in general, it would seem that these representatives saw themselves as being on the periphery of the multi-agency set-up..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994b: 16). Local authority housing departments were involved in most initiatives, though seemed, in general, to be more active in those initiatives focusing on situational crime prevention. On the whole, those representing education departments believed their involvement was based on the role of education in social crime prevention generally or on a commitment to young people specifically.

Those in the probation service responding to Liddle and Gelsthorpe's questioning expressed general commitment to multi-agency crime prevention, though their involvement in multi-agency initiatives tended to be rather inconsistent. In some areas the probation service assumed a 'prime mover' role – in other areas no representatives attended or the designated representatives attended erratically. Such inconsistent attendance sometimes seemed to be based on the focus within the multi-agency initiative – where a situational crime prevention focus had been favoured, probation involvement was lower. Business involvement in multi-agency initiatives was observed to be common but the involvement of elected members was not.

Finally, Liddle and Gelsthorpe report that, though voluntary and community groups "...did play a role..." in some multi-agency crime prevention researched, "...these groups have been under-utilised in many areas..." (1994b: 23). Indeed, such groups were usually uninvolved at strategic level and, in some areas, "...the expertise and local knowledge of voluntary groups was not drawn on at implementation level either..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994b: 23). Sometimes, though organizations such as Victim Support were represented in some areas, those representing such organizations believed themselves to be marginalized in the multi-agency initiative.

More especially, it seemed to Liddle and Gelsthorpe that voluntary organizations focused on crime prevention, such as Crime Prevention Panels and Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, had been somewhat overlooked in the development of multi-agency crime prevention initiatives. Hence, the respective contributions of such newer crime prevention initiatives and Crime Prevention Panels were not distinguished and this "...ha[d] given rise to confusion, duplication and competition in some areas..." (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994b: 23).

Seemingly, Liddle and Gelsthorpe (1994a, b) see a disjuncture between what is intended in policy on the multi-agency approach and what happens 'on the ground'. Indeed, Liddle and Gelsthorpe observe generally that "...while some areas have been prompted by central government Circulars on crime prevention to generate activity, others appear to have paid little or no attention either to the Circulars themselves, or to recommendations such as those offered in the Morgan Report..." (1994a: 27).

Liddle and Gelsthorpe's observations based on this Inter-Agency Crime Prevention Research Project have brought out further points about the multi-agency approach to crime prevention. First, as Sampson's discussions add to Pearson and colleagues' discussions as regards who attends multi-agency initiatives, when they attend and why they attend, so Liddle and Gelsthorpe's (1994a) discussions add to past discussions as regards what attendees do when they get there. Clearly, as per Liddle and Gelsthorpe's discussions, some attendees assume a much fuller role than others in multi-agency crime prevention. Another point seen is that the 'multi-agency model' is not unproblematic – multi-agency structures might be formal or informal and, because of changing membership and boundary blurring, it is hard to map out an informal model. A point raised in our reflections on Liddle and Gelsthorpe's discussions is that, because of such changes and blurring, it might be hard to map out both formal and informal models. An interesting point raised in Liddle and Gelsthorpe's discussions is that there

is sometimes no *co-ordination* in *collaborative* approaches. Once more, the point is raised that *just some* define the 'shape and direction' of multi-agency work. Sampson (1991) does not explain this as centred on power. Nor do Liddle and Gelsthorpe – they see it as centred more on leadership. Finally, as in Pearson and colleagues' research and Sampson's research, Liddle and Gelsthorpe's research raised the point that there is disjuncture between what is intended in policy on the multi-agency approach and what happens 'on the ground'.

We have discussed, then, that from around 1980 policy discourses have propounded a multi-agency approach to crime prevention. We have also explored some pioneering multi-agency crime prevention initiatives, with reference to some evaluative research, undertaken during the late 1980s[44]. From this early evaluative research, we can highlight some main multi-agency crime prevention literature 'themes' – attendance/representation; structures; and power.

Certainly, numerous points raised in the research set out here centre on these themes. This is not to suggest that these early research studies on partnership in crime prevention saw the same issues as important. Rather, each sees and discusses different issues as important. So, for Pearson and colleagues, deep, structural conflicts and power differences were important, though for Liddle and Gelsthorpe structure and participation were the main issues. Neither is it to suggest that these early research studies organized the points each brings out under the same headings. Again, these studies discuss similar points under dissimilar headings. So, Pearson and colleagues', Sampson's and Liddle and Gelsthorpe's discussions each raise the point that *just some*

[44]This is not, though, to suggest that the interaction between multi-agency policy and practical initiatives was well seen at this time. Rather, in, and especially between themselves, policy discourses and multi-agency initiatives have been intrinsically muddled. Policy discourse and multi-agency crime prevention initiatives have sometimes not coincided. 'On the ground' multi-agency initiatives have commonly not mirrored those multi-agency approaches propounded or intended in policy discourse. A point raised in *each* research study discussed was that there is often disjuncture between what is intended in policy on the multi-agency approach and what happens 'on the ground'. Also, those early practical initiatives intended to propound the multi-agency crime prevention policy discourse were generally not evaluated. Indeed, the "...flagship..." (Crawford 1998a: 32) Five Towns initiative – intended to propound the multi-agency crime prevention policy discourse – involved no proper research evaluation (see Crawford 1998a). The Five Towns evaluation conducted by Mark Liddle and Tony Bottoms was retrospective and published at least five years after the initiative commenced (Liddle and Bottoms 1991, 1994, cited in Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a). Certainly, "...evaluation and monitoring was the weakest element of most crime prevention programmes..." (1991: 22) observed by Morgan. Our discussion about these pioneering multi-agency crime prevention initiatives and studies of them is, then, based on a somewhat limited evaluative research body, consisting of sporadically conducted research, sometimes undertaken with no agenda to examine the multi-agency approach, again ensuring that interaction between multi-agency policy and practical initiatives has remained tenuous at best.

define problems and solutions in multi-agency approaches. Nonetheless, for Pearson and colleagues this centres on power, for Sampson it centres on central/executive/local level tensions and for Liddle and Gelsthorpe it centres on leadership. Also, these studies sometimes conceptualize the same issue differently. For Pearson and colleagues, informality is determinative of and reflected in ways of working in multi-agency initiative meetings. For Sampson, informality centres on liaison *outside* initiative meetings and for Liddle and Gelsthorpe informality is there being no 'formal' initiative. Finally, our highlighting some literature 'themes' is not to suggest that these pioneering researchers would organize points in their studies on partnership in crime prevention under the same themes as the researcher would use. So, Pearson and colleagues see the point that some agencies take autonomous decisions as based on power but the researcher suggests that this point might be based more on a lack of multi-agency spirit or commitment. Clearly, power and commitment could be different themes.

Whatever, highlighting multi-agency themes is not uncommon. Adam Crawford has also picked out 'axis' – "...some of the principal issues and differences within partnerships tend to revolve around a number of axis..." (1998a: 171, see Crawford 1994 a, b, 1998, b, c, d, 1999, 2001; Crawford and Jones 1995, 1996). For Crawford, these axes relate, first, to 'inter-organizational conflict and differential power relations'. Crawford suggests that Pearson and colleagues' discussions are too focused on times that conflict is realized and seen and he extends their discussions, examining how conflicts 'relate to' and 'are embedded in' "...routinised social action between the parties to a partnership..." (1998: 172; see Crawford and Jones 1996). Crawford notes that Crawford and Jones (1996) found not that there is overt conflict in partnerships but that conflict is avoided. Crawford suggests two main tactics used to avoid conflict. First, conflicts are dispersed into settings beyond partnership initiatives. So, rather than being negotiated in initiatives, conflicts are 'dealt with' in informal or shadow settings. Crawford suggests that differential power relations become paramount in determining inclusion in such settings. Secondly, another tactic used to avoid conflict is the 'Smorgasbord approach'. Crawford suggests that initiatives choose increasingly numerous aims because choosing lucid and limited aims might cause conflict – instead "...something for everyone is placed on the menu..." (1998a: 173). As Crawford points out, choosing multiple aims causes confusion and 'muddies the water', possibly damaging trust and probably meaning that essential aims are forgotten. Crawford supports Crawford and Jones' (1996) concerns that conflict avoidance tactics are

problematic because power relations remain unaddressed and conflict is "...not negotiated or resolved in any socially constructive manner..." (1998a: 174).

For Crawford (1998a) issues in partnerships revolve around further axes relating to levels of collaboration – are partnership approaches multi-agency or inter-agency?; 'degrees of formality and informality'; questions of hierarchy; and the role of a co-ordinator. Crawford (1998a) sees four further issues, 'questions of trust'; 'problems of accountability'; 'managerialism and partnerships'; and intra-organizational relations versus inter-organizational relations.

So, we have examined how, having been propounded in policy discourse, the multi-agency approach to crime prevention began to develop at a *practical* level. We have explored some early initiatives, discussed in some early studies about the developing multi-agency approach. From these early evaluative studies, we highlighted some main literature 'themes' – attendance; structures; and power – and noted that highlighting such themes is not uncommon. Can we also highlight main literature themes from research on *domestic violence* partnership approaches? Do these themes mirror those in crime prevention more generally?

9. Domestic Violence and Multi-Agency Approaches.

The Policy.

We have seen that police domestic violence policy has mirrored arguments in feminist centred research literature but that more recent domestic violence developments are occurring in policy discourse, specifically the Home Office's crime prevention agenda. We have seen, further, that this Home Office crime prevention agenda is increasingly grounded in a 'partnership orthodoxy'. Unsurprisingly, then, domestic violence too has become increasingly grounded in this orthodoxy. Nonetheless, the multi-agency approach has not always assumed the 'buzz' standing in domestic violence that it has in traditional crime prevention. Around the mid-1980s, some had begun to encourage multi-agency approaches on domestic violence. Certainly, the Women's National Commission in 1985 and then Lorna Smith in 1989 encouraged a 'really integrated and co-ordinated approach at all levels'. Smith's (1989) report led to Home Office Circular 60/90 (see Hague et al. 1996) that encouraged the police to, inter alia, liaise with other agencies on domestic violence. Further encouragement came in the 1992, Victim Support convened, National Inter-Agency Working Party Report. This Working Party Report began by claiming that "...domestic violence raises issues extending beyond

criminal justice agencies, and need[s] the active involvement of a wide range of services in the statutory and voluntary sectors..." (1992: 77). The Report made three recommendations on 'inter-agency work':

> "...the formation of local multi-agency domestic violence forums..." (1992: 78);
>
> "...inter-agency and multi-disciplinary training as the key to identifying good practice in service provision and addressing controversial issues..." (1992: 79); and
>
> "...that domestic violence forums should have clear aims and objectives, structures, policies and adequate funding..." (1992: 83).

The Working Party concluded that "...inter-agency work..." that "...is well structured, clearly directed and rooted in the firm acknowledgement of the seriousness of domestic violence and a commitment to address it..." (1992: 83) can be advantageous, meaning there is:

- increased and improved access to protection and help for women who suffer domestic violence;
- integrated service delivery;
- increased access to funding and other resources;
- improved local knowledge and awareness;
- heightened public awareness about the problem, necessary changes in and development of current services and resourcing; and
- increased awareness of strategies to reduce and prevent domestic violence (1992: 83).

The encouragement became louder in the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee's 'Inquiry into Domestic Violence' (1993) and the published 'Government Reply' (1993). Certainly, recommendation forty-one of the Inquiry (1993) suggested that the government encourage local multi-agency co-operation on domestic violence and the Government Reply examined "...how inter-agency good practice, once it has been identified, can be promulgated throughout the country..." (1993: 17). Further, around this time the British government signed the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women and a Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (United Nations 1990, 1993; see Hague et al. 1996). The United Nations Expert Group on Violence in the Family (1986) had earlier recommended a multi-agency approach to domestic violence.

Nonetheless, it was not until the mid-1990s that the multi-agency approach to domestic violence began to receive real focus in national policy discourse. The joint Home Office and Welsh Office 1995 Circular, 'Inter-Agency Co-ordination to Tackle Domestic Violence' was:

> "...primarily designed to encourage greater inter-agency co-operation between local agencies working to tackle the problems associated with domestic violence..." (para 1.1).

Not only did this Circular set out the 'roles and responsibilities of statutory and voluntary agencies', it also set out detailed guidance on and around "...inter-agency co-ordination to enhance the local response to domestic violence..." (para. 5.).

The 1995 Circular was followed in 1999 by 'Living Without Fear: An Integrated Approach to Tackling Violence Against Women', published by the Women's Unit. 'Living Without Fear' encourages a multi-agency approach to domestic violence. More, it claims that the government sees "...the sort of inter-agency partnership represented by domestic violence fora as the way forward..." and has, as one of three 'overall goals', the goal "...within five years to see effective multi-agency partnerships operating throughout England and Wales..." (Women's Unit 1999). Further, in 2000 the 1995 Circular was replaced by a new publication – 'Multi-Agency Guidance for Addressing Domestic Violence'. This guidance was prepared and published by the Home Office in collaboration with the Women's Unit, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Department for Education and Employment, the Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions, the Department of Health, the Lord Chancellor's Department, the Department of Social Security, the National Assembly for Wales, and the Department of Culture Media and Sport.

The guidance asserts that:

> "...partnership working is essential to providing a comprehensive response to the wide range of needs that domestic violence survivors may have. This document therefore sets out to encourage and support effective multi-agency working as well as addressing specific statutory agencies..." (Home Office et al. 2000: para 1.3).

Indeed, the document provides 'guidance to individual agencies' and then examines 'multi-agency working'. In examining such working the document begins by claiming that:

> "...effective work to address domestic violence has increasingly been carried out within the framework of specific multi-agency domestic violence fora..." (Home Office et al. 2000: para 3.1).

It then goes on to:

> "...identify some of the key issues which many fora have already encountered, and draw attention to some of the ways in which those issues have been successfully addressed..." (Home Office et al. 2000: para 3.1).

So, the guidance covers the 'basis and purpose of multi-agency working'; 'definitions of domestic violence'; 'leadership of fora'; 'the work of fora'; 'participation' in multi-agency initiatives; 'appropriate representatives and their role' in initiatives; 'employment of staff by fora'; 'information sharing'; and 'monitoring and evaluation'.

Interestingly, though it emphasizes multi-agency approaches as a *response* to domestic violence, the guidance does not mention 'responses' and focuses on these 'issues' that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives encounter.

Finally, the government has further encouraged multi-agency approaches on domestic violence in encouraging that bids to the Crime Reduction Programme[45] be made through multi-agency domestic violence initiatives[46].

So, notwithstanding some rather muted beginnings, policy discourse has become increasingly loud in propounding a multi-agency approach to domestic violence and in recent times the multi-agency approach has become the 'in-thing' in such discourse.

How has the multi-agency approach to domestic violence been seen 'on the ground'?

The Practice.

As multi-agency crime prevention has tended to remain rather unexamined, so there has been little examination of multi-agency approaches to domestic violence (see Kelly 1999). Most of our understanding of how multi-agency domestic violence approaches are seen 'on the ground' comes from a series of publications by Gill Hague and her colleagues in Bristol (Hague et al. 1995a, Hague et al. 1995b, 1996; Hague and Malos 1997, 1998; Hague 1997, 1999, 2000). Our understanding is furthered by publications from Nicola Dominy and Lorraine Radford (1996) and Jenny Clifton and her colleagues (1996). These publications, though, examine multi-agency domestic violence approaches within a much broader examination of domestic violence in Surrey and Sussex, respectively. So, as well as discussing multi-agency approaches, Dominy and Radford (1996) discuss 'women's experiences of domestic violence' and issues around law and legal services; refuges; housing and homelessness; health care professionals; and social services. Likewise, Clifton et al. (1996) discuss the incidence of domestic violence; women's experiences; children and domestic violence; women's support organizations; police responses; the criminal justice system; civil proceedings; statutory agencies' service provision on domestic violence; and 'non-statutory agencies'. Finally, they mention 'inter-agency co-operation' in their discussion of 'the way forward'. More understanding comes from a recent publication by Ruth Lewis, 'Progress Through

[45] The £250m Crime Reduction Programme was announced by the Home Secretary in Summer 1998. It is an "...evidence led programme that aims to reverse the long term rise in crime by identifying and piloting a range of cost effective approaches to reducing crime..." (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/domesticviolence/crp.htm).

[46] the "...prospectus [to bid to the CRP] invites local crime and disorder partnerships, domestic violence forums, and other relevant multi-agency partnerships and individual agencies working within a multi-agency context..." (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/domesticviolence/crp.htm).

Partnership: Domestic Violence Inter-Agency Forums in the North-East of England' (1998).

Because most of our understanding comes from their publications and, further, because the government relies heavily on their research in discussing multi-agency domestic violence approaches (see especially Home Office et al. 2000), our discussion of how the multi-agency approach to domestic violence has been seen 'on the ground' is focused on Gill Hague and colleagues' discussions. Between 1994 and 1996, Gill Hague, Ellen Malos and Wendy Dear undertook research that "...aimed to investigate, describe and analyse inter-agency responses to domestic violence across the country...to provide policy and practice discussion and guidance in order to facilitate the further development of the inter-agency approach..." (Hague et al. 1996: 11). These researchers mapped domestic violence multi-agency initiatives nationally; undertook a 'policy and practice study' in five geographical areas (South Yorkshire; North Wales; Bristol; Dorset; and the London Borough of Greenwich); and conducted an 'in depth study' in three areas (Derby, Walsall and Cleveland).

Interestingly, given that policy discourse on domestic violence multi-agency approaches was rather muted until the mid-1990s, Hague and colleagues found that there were over 200 domestic violence forums in existence in 1996. Drawing on their examination of these forums, Hague et al. discuss "...issues in multi-agency work..." (1996: 20), discussing specifically such issues as "...setting up and getting established..." (1996: 21); "...structure and organizational issues..." (1996: 31); and "...work done by inter-agency initiatives..." (1996: 41). Let us examine their conclusions on these three issues.

On setting up and getting established, Hague et al. found that, in multi-agency domestic violence approaches, there is "...a lack of uniform practice..." (1996: 21). These researchers found no "...distinct models of inter-agency work on domestic violence..." and numerous issues determined "...what happened and where..." (Hague et al. 1995: 11). Hague et al. propound that "...no two initiatives are the same..." (1996: 21) and, further, that, sometimes, multi-agency approaches on domestic violence are seen without a domestic violence initiative being founded. On occasions in their research, multi-agency liaison without a domestic violence initiative happened as a 'one-off' occurrence. Hague and colleagues found that time-limited, multi-agency groups were sometimes convened to devise new guidance on domestic violence service provision or that multi-agency training sessions on domestic violence were held on an occasional

basis. On other occasions, multi-agency liaison without an initiative centred on "...informal liaison, networking and coordination of service provision..." (Hague et al. 1996: 21) – "...informal inter-agency work..." (Hague et al. 1996: 22).

Though these researchers opine that such informal liaison "...can be just as effective and beneficial as more formal initiatives, and in some cases, more so..." (Hague et al. 1995: 15), they never explain just how they see such liaison. Past such opinions as "...interview evidence from the research indicates that there may be no need for more formalised service coordination..." and "...agencies and personnel may have established effective patterns of working together..." (Hague et al. 1996: 21), Hague and colleagues' opinions on 'informal liaison' remain somewhat unexplained throughout their discussions. Regardless, Hague et al. discuss multi-agency liaison without a multi-agency initiative no further and their discussions centre, instead, on "...established inter-agency initiatives..." (1996: 22).

Hague and colleagues explain that multi-agency initiatives were sometimes founded following a 'launch' seminar or conference and sometimes as specialist personnel were appointed in local authority equality or community safety units. Sometimes, the police founded initiatives within broader endeavours around service provision on domestic violence. Hague and colleagues found much variation in the 'initiating agency'. Certainly, though the police founded some initiatives, Women's Aid; local women's refuges; local women's advocacy services; domestic violence campaigning groups; local authority departments and specialist units; Victim Support; health promotion agencies/organizations; solicitors; and the probation service founded others. Within this 'setting up' discussion, Hague et al. discuss "...who is involved..." (1996: 23). These researchers found certain main 'stake-holders' or 'players' in the initiatives researched. Seemingly, these 'players' were both specialists in domestic violence and agencies that responded to domestic violence within much broader service provision. Hague and colleagues' discussions of specialist attendance, here, focus on *agency* specialism and on *domestic violence* specialism but they discuss neither *representatives'* specialism nor *multi-agency* specialism. They do not discuss whether representatives are domestic violence people day-to-day or whether attendees have as much commitment to multi-agency approaches as to domestic violence.

Hague and colleagues expand on 'who is involved' and discuss 'participation' in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives. On participation, Hague et al. say that:

> "...the evidence from [our] study indicates that the police and refuge services are the agencies most often involved. Probation, social services and housing are involved less frequently. Of the statutory agencies, other criminal justice services, local authority education departments and health services participate considerably less frequently again..." (1996: 52).

More specifically, these researchers present agencies' "...active participation..." (Hague et al. 1996: 52) in 50 mapped multi-agency domestic violence initiatives. Hague et al. found that "...the police are the most widely represented of all agencies on local multi-agency initiatives..." (1996: 24) though do not explain this 'wide representation'. 'Wide representation' could mean, first, that, within each initiative researched, police attendees were consistent in attendance. Secondly, it could be that the police attended numerous initiatives researched – certainly, the police 'actively participated' in 43 of 50 mapped initiatives nationally and Hague and colleagues claim that police 'involvement' in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in their research seemed more expansive than in Sharon Grace's 1995 research[47]. Certainly, Grace reveals that those questioned "...said that the police showed a marked reluctance to be involved in inter-agency working and many felt that they did not have a serious commitment to this kind of work..." (1995: 52). Grace found that just 16 of 24 DVOs interviewed were "...personally involved in an inter-agency group for domestic violence..." (1999: 224) and only 15 of 38 senior officers said their force was so involved.

Thirdly, wide representation could mean that numerous and/or assorted police representatives attended the initiatives researched – certainly, the police were involved in multi-agency initiatives at "...both practitioner and policy-making levels..." (Hague et al. 1995: 53). Hague et al. found that, in some areas, the support of police Chief Constables had been obtained and note that police management appeared "...more committed to, and in some cases more involved in..." (1996: 53) initiatives than other agencies' management. The police had chaired and administered the Forum in the study area, Walsall, and in the study area, Dorset, police representatives had "...taken a key role in developing the domestic violence forum..." (Hague et al. 1996: 53).

Hague et al. reflect on police 'involvement' in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and claim that "...while harmonious relations within domestic violence

[47] Beginning in 1992, Sharon Grace conducted research that endeavoured "...to discover how far [Home Office Circular 60/90] recommendations are now reflected in current police policies and practice..." (Grace 1995: vii). Within this Home Office research, a telephone survey of all forces in England and Wales around their arrangements and policies on domestic violence was conducted. Interviews were also undertaken with police officers of different ranks; DVOs; victims of domestic violence and representatives of the Crown Prosecution Service, refuges, local authority housing services, Victim Support and some further domestic violence service providers on police responses to domestic violence.

forums appear to exist in many areas surveyed during the research, it is also clear from research interviews that difficulties can be experienced between the police and some agencies participating in inter-agency work..." (1996: 54). Nonetheless, these researchers never really tackle these 'difficulties'. Indeed, they discuss "...difficulties where forums were dominated by the police..." (Hague et al. 1996: 53), though they never explain this domination. They claim that "...some forums which were established and led by the police have experienced problems..." (Hague et al. 1996: 22). Possibly, they mean that police domination is based on police initiation and/or that it is based on police leadership. Hague et al. also claim that "...forums which were chaired and dominated by police officers..." (1996: 52) encountered problems. Possibly, they mean that police domination is necessarily seen as police representatives chair initiatives. Further, Hague et al. point out that "...wider philosophical and 'political' issues can be debated about the involvement of the police and the refuge movement in joint work..." (1996: 52).

Possibly, they mean, then, that the 'difficulties between the police and some agencies' are based on the police que the police. On this meaning, difficulties might not just be seen as the police *dominate* (whatever domination means) multi-agency initiatives but might be seen whenever the police *attend* such initiatives? Essentially, Hague et al never problematize "...the difficulties thrown up by police involvement..." (1996: 54).

On other service providers, Hague et al. found that "...the probation service takes an active role in some inter-agency initiatives..." (1996: 54). Nonetheless, Hague and colleagues found, further, that probation service 'involvement' in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives is, on occasions, based on certain probation officers' personal, rather than agency, interest, and sometimes occurs 'in spite of', rather than 'because of', the probation service (see Hague et al. 1995b). Throughout their research, Hague and colleagues found that the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), court personnel and sentencers 'were rarely active' in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives. Seemingly, the CPS 'participated' in some initiatives, though "...a very large number of groups...noted its absence..." (Hague et al. 1996: 24). Hague et al. found that local solicitors "...were more often represented..." (1996: 55).

Hague and colleagues are uncertain on social service departments' 'involvement'. Seemingly, social service departments were "...active in a large number..." of initiatives but were "...absent surprisingly often..." (Hague et al. 1996: 55). Throughout their research, Hague et al. found that basic grade social workers attended

multi-agency initiatives, usually through a personal interest and on an ad hoc basis, without support from colleagues and/or managers, and "...policy makers and social services management were not in evidence..." (1996: 55). On other local authority departments, Hague et al. found that "...housing departments are often active in multi-agency domestic violence forums..." (1996: 56) and that such departments showed a "...relatively high degree of participation..." (Malos 1999: 204) in six of eight study areas in their research, usually through the 'participation' of homelessness sections or homeless persons units. Nonetheless, housing departments 'actively participated' in just 27 of 50 mapped initiatives. More, though in some initiatives housing department management "...supported the domestic violence initiative in an active way..." (Hague et al. 1996: 56), numerous initiatives never gained such management support. Seemingly, education departments were much less 'involved' in initiatives. Certainly, Hague et al. reveal that education departments 'actively participated' in just six of 50 mapped multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and were 'active and prominent participants' in two of eight study areas – "...in general...education departments are rarely active in domestic violence forums..." (1996: 57). Further, reflecting on this research, Gill Hague (1999, 2000) specifically mentions education departments as non-attendees on multi-agency domestic violence initiatives.

In these reflections, Hague also specifically mentions health services as non-attendees. Indeed, through their research, Hague et al. see that "...health authorities and health trust professionals are not much involved in many inter-agency initiatives. Doctors and other primary care health staff, with the exception of midwives and health visitors in some areas, are noted by their absence..." (1996: 57). Finally, Hague et al. found that, though Victim Support organizations "...frequently participate in domestic violence forums...", in some areas researched such organizations were "...not notably active or involved in..." initiatives (1996: 57).

Discussing 'participation', Hague et al. mention that some representatives interviewed expressed disappointment that some social service departments were non-attendees or that "...where local health services were involved in multi-agency domestic violence work in the study, this involvement was much appreciated by practitioners and policy makers alike..." (1996: 57). Likewise, reflecting on Hague and colleagues' research, Gill Hague explains that health services "...need to take a more active role in inter-agency work..." (1999: 15). Nonetheless, in no discussions do Hague and colleagues problematize 'participation' further. They do not conceptualize *why* some health

services remain unrepresented. More, though these researchers demand greater guidance on 'participation' in multi-agency initiatives, they do not conceptualize why this might change participation – are they saying that some agencies do not participate because they have not been *told* to?

Lastly on 'setting up and getting established', Hague et al. discuss "...getting agreement and making decisions..." (1996: 26) in multi-agency initiatives. Seemingly, these researchers found that some initiatives met over, sometimes long, periods without seeking agreement or decisions[48]. As initiatives moved past this period, it seems a number endeavoured to develop guiding principles, usually based on understandings of domestic violence as per Women's Aid – such understandings were usually approved. Nonetheless, Hague et al. found that "...contention around Women's Aid's views existed in some localities..." (1996: 27). More specifically:

> "...very real differences in politics, philosophy and attitude may exist between refuges which have their origins and roots in the social movement of women against domestic violence, and other agencies, particularly statutory ones, which do not share this history and politics..." (Hague et al. 1996: 64).

Throughout Hague and colleagues' discussions on the development of guiding principles, one remembers Pearson and colleagues' discussions on the "...significant areas of difficulty..." around "...who defines the boundaries of a locality, its problems and its needs..." (Pearson et al. 1992: 58) in multi-agency crime prevention. Certainly, Hague et al. note that:

> "...the development of a set of [guiding] principles...can involve dealing with philosophical and operational differences between agencies and differing attitudes to domestic violence. Resolving such differences without resorting to a 'lowest common denominator' situation, and while attempting to build trust and honesty, was singled out by various interviewees in all the study areas as a major issue in conducting inter-agency work..." (1996: 26).

Surprisingly, though, Hague and colleagues do not mention Pearson and colleagues' earlier research.

Past the development of guiding principles, Hague et al. found that the "...development of inter-agency cooperation demands careful communication skills and inter-personal interaction..." (1996: 28). Seemingly, some initiatives researched had experienced inter-personal disputes such that some members ceased attending or employed workers resigned. Indeed, "...research interviews provided some evidence that less combative discussions and

[48] Hague et al. (1996) deem this meeting 'networking' and 'information exchange' – these issues are discussed below.

respectful, careful presentation of opinions could have a more successful outcome than forceful challenge, without necessarily sacrificing honesty..." (Hague et al. 1996: 28). Unfortunately, Hague and colleagues somewhat ground these points in *inter-personal* issues rather than *inter-organizational* issues. They are unclear on whether these "...very difficult situations..." (Hague et al. 1996: 28) were dichotomized, inter alia, on a statutory versus voluntary division, or an organizations responding to women versus organizations responding to men division. Further, they are unclear on whether these very difficult situations were 'exaggerated or mediated' by *power*. Again, as Hague and colleagues discuss these disputes (conflicts?) one is reminded of Pearson and colleagues' discussions on conflict mediated by power, though Hague and colleagues do not mention this earlier research.

Another 'main issue in multi-agency work' that Hague et al. discuss is "...structure and organizational issues..." (1996: 31). Seemingly, most initiatives researched had 'aims and objectives'. Usually, these centred on "...general issues about combating domestic violence and viewing it as a crime, about increasing the safety of abused women and children, about integrating equalities issues into the work of the forum, and about engaging preventative and educational work in service coordination..." (Hague et al. 1996: 31). Hague et al. found that these broader aims sometimes stood alongside specified "...and more easily achievable..." (1996: 31) objectives. Hague and colleagues found that, as well as past aims and objectives, some initiatives researched had devised 'terms of reference', which embraced 'mission statements' and/or equal opportunities policies. Hague et al. propound that "...the study accumulated evidence to suggest strongly that the underlying aim of all domestic violence forums should be to improve women and children's safety and to combat domestic violence..." (1996: 31). These researchers never expand on this aim. Specifically, they never expand on whether initiatives *had* this 'underlying aim' or whether initiatives agreed that improving women and children's safety and combating domestic violence *should* be their 'underlying aim'. More, they never expand on how this 'underlying aim' related in the initiatives researched to the general issue aims and specified objectives that some initiatives had.

Hague and colleagues found that some initiatives had developed a 'formal structure'. These researchers explain that "...most commonly, this consists of a smaller steering group or steering committee (sometimes known as a management committee) to manage the day-to-day running of the initiative on behalf of the whole forum..."

(Hague et al. 1996: 31). Some initiatives, though, had no steering committee. These researchers never expand on the 'formality' of such initiatives as their opinions on 'informal liaison' remain somewhat unexplained, so Hague and colleagues' opinions on 'formal liaison' remain unexplained. An additional point on structure and organizational issues is that it seems some multi-agency initiatives "...establish sub-groups to progress different types of work..." (Hague et al. 1996: 32). Though Hague et al. opine that such sub-groups "...can work particularly well..." (1996: 32), they never elucidate just how this happens or, indeed, what 'well' means. Nonetheless, they do point out that multi-agency structures are sometimes complicated and that how sub-groups 'fit in' within such structures is sometimes uncertain.

On structure and organizational issues, Hague et al. discuss issues around "...gaining influence..." (1996: 33). Specifically, they propound that of 'key importance' in gaining influence is initiatives evolving a "...clear identity..." (Hague et al. 1996: 33). Further, they say that a clear identity is only evolved as initiatives maintain consistent attendance and commitment. Maintaining such commitment sometimes seemed somewhat troublesome – "...getting each agency to take it seriously, to make a commitment to it and to send delegated representatives (rather than rely on ad hoc personal interest) were major tasks in all the research areas..." (Hague et al. 1996: 33). Here, Hague and colleagues somewhat assume that gaining influence is needed – *why* this influence is needed is never examined. Similarly, Hague and colleagues never examine why, and how, evolving a clear identity means that influence is gained or whether evolving an identity *necessarily* means that influence is gained. Hague and colleagues argue, additionally, that influence is gained as multi-agency domestic violence initiatives obtain the commitment of management and/or senior practitioners in such agencies as the local authority and the police. Through a more recent discussion, Gill Hague expands on this proposition. Hague indicates that Hague and colleagues' research found "...that in order to enable effective inter-agency co-ordination and the adoption of specific improvements in agency policy and practice, the active commitment (if not the participation) of senior managers to multi-agency domestic violence work was essential..." (1999: 16). More specifically, Hague opines that Hague and colleagues research found that management commitment and support could mean that multi-agency approaches "...become part of the agreed policy

of...organization[s]..." and that, where such commitment and support had been gained, "...multi-agency forums could participate actively in evolving domestic violence policy and strategy across a whole locality and could also act as an effective 'watchdog' on the quality of local service delivery..." (1999: 17). Nonetheless, Hague suggests, further, that management attendance on multi-agency initiatives "...can detract from the creative dynamism and grass-roots appeal of [multi-agency domestic violence] initiative[s]..." (1999: 16). Seemingly, Hague et al. see the "...difficulty..." as one "...of both ensuring grass-roots or frontline participation and also gaining influence with and commitment from management and local policy makers..." (1996: 33). But *why* is this a difficulty – why are grass-roots *and* management attendance needed? Hague and colleagues rather assume there is a difficulty here and do not explain the nuances in this question of hierarchy. This is probably because these researchers conflate *policy* and *practice*. Certainly, Hague's opinion that management attendance can mean the 'adoption of specific improvements in agency policy and practice' does not take into account that policy and practice on domestic violence are different. So, policy initiatives might need management attendance but this does not mean that *practice* initiatives need such attendance too.

On 'structure and organizational issues', Hague et al. discuss, finally, 'resourcing' and the "...employment of workers..." (1996: 36). On resourcing, Hague et al.'s main point is that "...lack of resources was the single largest factor inhibiting the development of local inter-agency work on domestic violence..." (1996: 35). Seemingly, most initiatives had no resources. Those that had usually obtained them "...from a variety of sources, including various local authority committees, the Police Authority, partnership initiatives, the Home Office Safer Cities Scheme, and other similar sources..." (Hague et al. 1996: 35). As such, there seemed a 'piecemeal approach' – initiatives "...struggle[d] to obtain a 'basket' of local finance..." (Hague et al. 1996: 35). On the employment of workers, "...the study accumulated strong evidence from many areas of the country that the employment of a coordinator or a development worker was of key importance in progressing inter-agency domestic violence work..." (Hague et al. 1996: 36). More specifically, most interviewees believed that "...only the most minimal inter-agency coordination could take place..." (Hague et al. 1996: 36) without such a post. Seemingly, co-ordinators "...enabled...inter-agency initiative[s] to become fully established and to initiate a variety of types of projects..." and were "...able to give a domestic violence forum presence, focus and direction, and to do behind the scenes net-working and contacting to 'oil' the inter-agency process..." (Hague et al. 1996: 37).

Hague and colleagues rather conflate here since 'co-ordination' is hardly the same as giving initiatives 'presence' or 'direction'? Though unfortunate, this conflation might reflect the somewhat 'jack of all trades' character it seems co-ordinators assume. Certainly, these researchers found that research interviewees "...listed a variety of tasks which need to be fulfilled by a coordinator as an organiser, as a spokesperson and publicist for the project, as a protagonist on behalf of abused women and children, and as an administrator and planner with a vision for the project and the future..." (Hague et al. 1996: 37). Unsurprisingly, Hague and colleagues discuss the 'qualities' that co-ordinators need. This means their discussions are grounded in people as co-ordinators rather than in the co-ordinator post que such. This is unfortunate. Tilley (1992) thinks the co-ordinator post is *pivotal* in multi-agency crime prevention[49]. What Hague and colleagues think in multi-agency domestic violence approaches is unclear because they discuss people as co-ordinators.

Another main issue that Hague et al. discuss is "...the work done by inter-agency initiatives..." (1996: 41). Hague et al. found that a main 'work' area in numerous multi-agency initiatives is "...exchanging information and educating each other about their own work on domestic violence..." (1996: 41). These researchers do not explain information exchange (was information on clients exchanged?) but they do think that exchanges of information usually encouraged better practice. They claim that multi-agency attendees interviewed "...were almost unanimous that networking and communication between agencies improved greatly between agencies as a result of inter-agency initiatives..." (Hague et al. 1996: 41). Hague and colleagues examine neither how, nor indeed whether, 'exchanges of information' encourage better practice, nor how networking and communication improve 'as a result of' multi-agency initiatives. Notwithstanding, these researchers propound that "...the 'talking shop' aspect of inter-agency work [can] fulfil a useful function..." (Hague et al. 1996: 41).

Essentially, they believe that in multi-agency initiatives, "...even where no further coordinating work is attempted, improved networking is of value and benefit in itself..." (Hague et al. 1996: 41). Nonetheless, another 'work area' *is* "...co-ordinating local services..." (Hague et al. 1996: 42). Unfortunately, service co-ordination remains somewhat unexplained in Hague and colleagues' discussions and they appear to collapse distinctions between co-ordinated; collaborative; and multi-agency service provision on domestic violence. Certainly, these researchers opine that service co-

[49] Specifically, in the Safer Cities Projects mentioned earlier.

ordination "...include[s] improvements in collaborative work between agencies..." and "...may include producing material which enables agencies to work together more effectively..." and "...may include...initiating practical improvements in referral systems..." (Hague et al. 1996: 42). Surely they do not mean that co-ordination, collaboration 'working together' and 'referrals' are the same.

Regardless, past improving referral systems, Hague and colleagues found that some multi-agency initiatives researched attempted to improve local service delivery. Specifically, initiatives conducted 'service audits' on attending agencies' policy and practice on domestic violence, towards the devising of an 'action plan'. Other initiatives conducted research, centred on unmet need in service provision. More specifically, "...improving service delivery may include formulating and assisting in implementing general multi-agency practice guidelines to be used by all member agencies..." (Hague et al. 1996: 42). Hague and colleagues found that initiatives researched had formulated and implemented guidelines on such issues as domestic violence resources and women's rights. Sometimes, such guidance centred on certain practitioners. Further, multi-agency initiatives researched had, on occasions, assisted individual agencies/organizations in devising domestic violence policies and good practice guidelines. Seemingly, though, individual agencies/organizations had devised domestic violence guidance without such assistance. This guidance "...contained omissions which could have been avoided if the multi-agency project had been involved..." (Hague et al. 1996: 43). Finally, on 'improving local service delivery', Hague et al. discuss how some multi-agency initiatives were "...able to act as an informal 'watchdog' on the quality of services..." (1996: 43).

Hague and colleagues also found that some multi-agency initiatives designed and provided training on domestic violence or co-ordinated training that other agencies provided. Such training, it seemed, covered multi-agency and/or single agency gatherings and occurred as free-standing training units or as part of in-service training programmes. An associated work area was 'engaging in public education work'. Hague and colleagues found that numerous multi-agency initiatives published leaflets, booklets, posters, et cetera on domestic violence. Seemingly, these publications focus on the public and/or on women and children experiencing domestic violence. Some initiatives engaged in further 'education work' – "...putting on exhibitions about domestic violence or running roadshows, providing stalls at community events or setting up public meetings, workshops, plays..." (Hague et al. 1996: 45). Further,

Hague et al. discuss the "...growing trend for multi-agency initiatives to undertake preventative work in school (sic) and youth projects..." (1996: 48).

Finally, Hague and colleagues found that some multi-agency domestic violence initiatives undertake service provision on domestic violence. Some such provision centred on men, as initiatives run perpetrator programmes[50]. Some of this provision was centred on women. Some initiatives had established telephone help-lines or other information lines and others had established women's self-help groups and drop-in sessions. Hague et al. claim that "...multi-agency initiatives to set up new projects of this type can be highly successful..." (1996: 47) but do not explain what they would see as producing 'success' here. More, though discussing initiatives' 'direct service provision', Hague and colleagues do not take the opportunity to discuss organizations' service provision vis-à-vis initiatives and somewhat disregard how service provision on domestic violence *relates to* multi-agency domestic violence initiatives. Is (and how is) organizational service provision on domestic violence affected as agencies attend multi-agency initiatives?

The final main 'issue in multi-agency work' that Hague and colleagues discuss centres on the battered women's movement within multi-agency domestic violence approaches. Hague et al. found that "...while local voluntary sector groups are represented in most inter-agency domestic violence forums, in some they are not..." (1996: 60). These researchers found, further, that "...even where there is some involvement, the voluntary sector in general appears to be frequently under-represented on multi-agency forums, and on their steering groups in particular, so that membership may appear skewed towards the statutory sector..." (Hague et al. 1996: 60). Seemingly, Hague and colleagues found more extensive Women's Aid and refuge involvement – refuges 'actively participated' in 40 of 50 mapped multi-agency initiatives. Hague and colleagues reveal that Women's Aid refuges 'actively and prominently participated' in multi-agency initiatives in seven of eight 'study areas'; that specialist refuges participated thus in initiatives in four of eight areas; and that other refuges participated thus in initiatives in three of eight areas. Nonetheless, these researchers warn that "...it appears from the mapping study that in some extreme cases, refuges are not involved on any level in their local domestic violence forum, or only attend very rarely..." (Hague et al. 1996: 62).

[50] For more information on perpetrator programmes see Dobash et al. (1996); Burton et al. (1998); Mullender and Burton (2000).

On this lesser involvement, Hague et al. say that refuges' "...full participation is not always possible due to the continual crisis work which they undertake and, frequently, their poor staffing ratios and low pay..." (1996: 61). Essentially, Hague et al. are concluding that, since refuges are under-resourced, their attendance on multi-agency domestic violence initiatives is intrinsically problematic – "...meaningful involvement by refuges in inter-agency work can appear as an unachievable luxury..." (1996: 62). These opinions centre on pragmatic issues. Nonetheless, Hague et al. say, further, that "...power differences between statutory and voluntary agencies..." (1996: 60) discouraged voluntary sector 'involvement' in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives researched. On these 'power differences', Hague et al. discuss, specifically, how numerous domestic violence organizations "...felt excluded from the inter-agency initiatives to some extent in almost all the study areas, and many felt inhibited from participating actively..." – these organizations "...stated one or several of the following: that they regarded their local forum as an institutional and statutory body; that it appeared to be a white middle class organization not concerned with issues of equal opportunities; that voluntary sector agencies were not listened to; or that formal or stilted ways of conducting meetings were alienating and inhibiting..." (1996: 60).

Seemingly, Hague and colleagues found that statutory agencies tended to 'take over' and, as a consequence, to 'own the issue' and, as a further consequence, to marginalize Women's Aid, refuges and women's advocacy services in multi-agency initiatives. The researchers never really elucidate just how these 'take-overs' were seen, though some points discussed shed some light on this issue. One such point is that, on occasions in their research, Women's Aid and refuges "...felt excluded and overlooked by other agencies..." (Hague et al. 1996: 62). Specifically, they were regarded within multi-agency initiatives as just one of many voluntary organizations responding to domestic violence, rather than as specialist organizations in service provision. Another point is that refuge services found it a "...constant struggle..." (Hague et al. 1996: 63) to have the voices of Women's Aid and of women and children heard in some multi-agency initiatives researched. Seemingly, refuge representatives that Hague and colleagues interviewed discussed feeling like 'lone trouble-makers' or believing that their opinions were misunderstood or deemed unimportant within such initiatives. A further point is that refuge workers sometimes "...felt, or in reality were, intimidated by large statutory agencies, like the police, in terms of expressing their views..." (Hague et al. 1996: 64).

Hague and colleagues purport that these points centre on 'power issues' and 'power differences' but, unfortunately, never expand on 'power'. For instance, they argue that "...less powerful agencies may feel overlooked, silenced, or disregarded..." (Hague et al. 1995: 23), yet never expand on whether *because they have* less power such agencies are overlooked, silenced, et cetera or whether *through being* overlooked, silenced, et cetera they have less power. More unfortunately, contradictions are seen in Hague and colleagues' propositions on power. Certainly, these researchers opine that refuges, Women's Aid or otherwise, are "...small organisations, often under-funded, with little realistic power..." (Hague et al. 1996: 61). Nonetheless, they also claim that "...Women's Aid is accepted as the lead specialist agency in dealing with domestic violence..." (Hague et al. 1996: 61) and, as per a research interviewee, that "...Women's Aid doesn't have the power like statutory agencies have, but it's the *moral* power they've got..." (Agency Interviewee, quoted in Hague et al. 1996: 61. Italics Original). How do Hague and colleagues see 'power' – is power based on resources, on specialism, or on morality?

On the refuge movement and multi-agency approaches, Hague et al. discuss last, though under no circumstances least, "...the involvement of women and children experiencing domestic violence in multi-agency initiatives..." (1996: 69). Hague and colleagues interviewed 70 abused women on, inter alia, 'involvement in' multi-agency domestic violence initiatives. These researchers discovered that just five of 70 abused women interviewed "...had heard of the multi-agency initiative in their area..." – "...eight thought they might have heard of it but were not sure. Only two were involved on it on any level..." (Hague et al. 1996: 70). Nonetheless, 60 women "...felt that women's voices should be heard in their local domestic violence forum and that it was important that agencies listen to and learn from women who have experienced domestic violence..." (Hague et al. 1996: 70). No abused women interviewed believed that survivors should not 'be involved in' multi-agency initiatives, though some were unsure just what 'involvement' could mean. Interestingly, Hague and colleagues seem as unsure as abused women interviewed just what 'involvement' could mean. Throughout their discussions on the 'involvement' of women and children in multi-agency initiatives, these researchers seem disinclined to problematize and 'involvement' remains a somewhat assumed notion.

Hague and colleagues' discussions also bring out points about partnership approaches, this time in domestic violence:

One point seen in Hague and colleagues' discussions is that there is no multi-agency domestic violence 'model'. Another point is that informal liaison can be just as effective and beneficial as formal liaison. What informal liaison is, though, is not something brought out in Hague and colleagues' discussions. Other points seen are about who attends initiatives and when they attend. One point is that attendees include both specialists in domestic violence and those that encounter domestic violence in broader service provision. Whether representatives are domestic violence people day-to-day or whether attendees have as much commitment to multi-agency approaches as to domestic violence is not brought out. Another point is that attendance on initiatives is not guaranteed – some agencies and organizations might not attend or might be poor attendees. Readers might remember that Alice Sampson's (1991) research also brought out this point.

Hague and colleagues' research also brings out points about 'conflict'. One point is that 'difficulties' can be experienced between the police and other attendees – how these 'difficulties' happen, though, is not disclosed. Another point is that there can be 'very real differences' in opinions as guiding principles are developed, especially about domestic violence. Another point is that there can be 'very difficult situations' in multi-agency meetings. Clearly, conflict is an issue in partnership approaches. Hague and colleagues' discussions bring out the points that most initiatives have aims and objectives; that some have steering or management committees; and that some establish sub-groups to progress their work. But their discussions also highlight, as Liddle and Gelsthorpe's discussions did, that such formal structures are not without their problems. Other points are about what initiatives do – the work initiatives undertake. An interesting point here is that initiatives *increase* attendees' interaction outside meetings. Sampson's (1991) discussions bring out this point. Here it is brought out about partnership approaches in domestic violence. What is not brought out, though, is whether and how initiatives and the work they do affect agencies and organizations' service provision. Finally, it seems, again, that power is a big issue. Hague and colleagues' discussions bring out the point that power differences are problematic in domestic violence initiatives. Their discussions do not, however, shed light on what power is or what the consequences of power are.

Seemingly, from Hague and colleagues' discussions on multi-agency approaches to domestic violence we can also highlight attendance; structures; and power as literature

'themes'. Further, Hague and colleagues' discussions add one further 'theme' – outcomes.

Again, our highlighting these literature 'themes' is not to suggest that Gill Hague and her colleagues would organize points in their research on partnership in domestic violence under the same themes that the researcher would use. Certainly, these researchers organize their discussions about 'issues in multi-agency work' under different headings to attendance, structures, power and outcomes. Regardless, how the points brought out in the literature on partnership approaches in both crime prevention and domestic violence are organized is less important than the points themselves. Certainly, the points themselves assume a significant role in progressing the research and the thesis because they function as a resource that might be used in developing the main questions that might be examined in the current research.

The points raised in the literature on partnership approaches might be used in developing the main research questions, topics and problematics because each appears to merit greater examination. First, the points raised in the literature about partnership in *crime prevention* appear to need greater examination vis-à-vis partnership in *domestic violence*, especially since, as seen throughout this Chapter, Home Office crime prevention and domestic violence are increasingly associated. The issue is, then, whether and, if so how, the same things that have happened in the developing multi-agency approach to crime prevention are happening in the developing multi-agency approach to domestic violence. Secondly, the points raised in Hague and colleagues' discussions, and in other literature on partnership approaches in domestic violence, might also be used in developing the main research questions because a main aim of the research and the thesis has been to increase understanding about partnership approaches in domestic violence. A main issue, then, is whether the points raised in Hague and colleagues' research are also raised in the current research. Partnership approaches in domestic violence remain rather unexamined. Examining whether and how the same things that were happening in Hague and colleagues' research happen in the current research might increase understandings about partnership approaches in domestic violence. Thirdly, the points raised in the literature on partnership approaches (whether in crime prevention *or* domestic violence) might be used in developing the main research questions because some such points raise more questions than they answer. These questions and uncertain areas have been suggested from time to time through this Chapter as the researcher considered and critiqued the literature.

Summarizing, the numerous interesting points raised in the literature on partnership approaches and organized under the four themes (attendance, structures, outcomes and power) function as a resource that can be used in developing the research questions, topics and problematics in the current empirical research. These questions will now be set out.

10. The Research Questions, Topics and Problematics.

Attendance.

The research questions about attendance are:

Who sits around the multi-agency table? Which agencies and organizations attend? Which do not? Why do some attend but some do not attend?

As seen, the 'players' in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in Hague and colleagues' research were both specialists in domestic violence and agencies that responded to domestic violence within much broader service provision. But, are representatives domestic violence people day-to-day? Are representatives committed domestic violence people or committed multi-agency people? Is attendance based on personal interest or employment?

Also, when do these 'who' sit around the multi-agency table? Is poor and changing membership an issue in all multi-agency approaches? Specifically, do some agencies not attend or attend inconsistently? Are some agencies poor attendees? Are some meetings poorly attended? Why? What does this mean? How is it experienced?

Other questions that might be considered centre on how attendees sit around the multi-agency table – on conflict. Are there 'very difficult situations' in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives? Are any such situations about certain agencies or organizations? Are they about the issue being discussed?

There are two main questions that might be posed on representation. First, how is the (domestic violence) community represented in multi-agency (domestic violence) approaches? Secondly, how are agencies themselves represented? Are agency representatives representative?

Structures.

The questions to be posed on multi-agency (domestic violence) structures are:

Does the form that multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence take differ in different areas? As seen in Liddle and Gelsthorpe's discussions and Hague and colleagues' discussions, the 'multi-agency model' is not unproblematic. Is there a multi-agency domestic violence model? What influence might the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 have on the multi-agency domestic violence model?

Also, is there overlapping between initiatives in different areas? Do initiatives in different areas fit together? How do they fit together? Essentially, was there 'confusion, duplication and competition' multi-agency domestic violence approaches as seen in Liddle and Gelsthorpe's (1994a) research?

Also, is 'informality' as initiatives' meetings have no pre-arranged agenda or no 'formal systems of representation' seen in initiatives? Is informality, conceptualized as the time outside and/or before/after the meeting setting, seen in initiatives?

Do those representing some organizations change over time? Why? How is this experienced? How is losing personnel *experienced* in formal multi-agency structures? Are concerns about lost personnel related only to discussions about sustainability? Is 'coming with the post' essentially a 'good thing'?

Outcomes.

There are three main questions on initiatives that need to be posed regarding 'outcomes':

1. What do such initiatives *aim* to do?

Do initiatives in the current research have as an 'underlying aim' improving women and children's safety and combating domestic violence? Readers might remember that Hague and colleagues say that initiatives *should* have this as their aim but never examine whether initiatives *do* have such an aim.

2. What *do* they do?

What 'work' do initiatives do? Is it the same as that done by initiatives in Hague and colleagues' research?

3. What does this *mean*?

Do multi-agency domestic violence initiatives become 'ends in themselves'?

Also, do multi-agency initiatives meet the needs of attendees but not the needs of communities? Do initiatives *increase* attendees' interaction outside meetings? Does networking and communication improve 'as a result of' multi-agency initiatives?

Last but not least, is organizational service provision affected as agencies attend multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and, if so, how?

Power.

Finally, it might not surprise the reader that the researcher has two key questions on power.

1. What is power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches?

Is it based on some agencies being more connected than others? Is it based on issues around Clarke et al.'s (1980) notion of structural subordination? Is it based on statutory status per se? Is power based on resources, on specialism, and/or morality? Is power prevailing in the definitions of local needs and problems?

2. What are the consequences of having power in such approaches?

Is the power to define the local problem and solutions to the problem the only consequence of power? Are other consequences seen in initiatives?

Readers will see, then, that the interesting points raised in the literature on partnership approaches function as a resource that can be used in developing a number of questions for the current empirical research. It might be mentioned that, in the current research, interviews were conducted with initiative attendees[51]. The research questions, topics and problematics set out above are *not* the questions that were posed in these research interviews. Rather, the questions that were asked in research interviews were formulated around the research questions – certain interview questions were chosen that might best enable the researcher to examine the problematics encompassed in these research questions. At the same time, other methodologies were chosen because they, also, seemed appropriate to use in examining these questions. How the research interviews and the other methods seemed appropriate, and, indeed, were used, to examine the main research questions and problematics is described and discussed in Chapter Four. The main questions and problematics are set out here in Chapter Two because each is so much associated with the research literature. Because the points seen in the literature were used to develop them, it seemed most appropriate that the research

[51] Discussed more fully in Chapter Four, Methodology.

questions, topics and problematics, were set out alongside the literature discussions and our reflections on such discussions.

11. Conclusion.

Chapter Two began by examining domestic violence. Discussion then moved to the development of refuges. We saw that the women's liberation movement provided the base for the battered women's movement. We saw that the first refuge for battered women emerged in 1972 and that more than 40 refuges had been established by 1974, and we examined the roles played by refuges and the services provided by Women's Aid. We then saw that in the 1970s and early 1980s there soon emerged a vast literature on domestic violence, increasingly documenting service provision to women and children. We considered the emerging literature on the responses provided by the state sector, finding that common threads run through it. We then saw that throughout the 1980s there developed an increasing focus in the literature on the police, seeing that, though this literature has centred on the argument that a better police response based on increased intervention has been needed, more recent literature has questioned interventionist and punitive responses. This more nuanced position on policing domestic violence highlights the interaction between *support* and *safety*. This interaction is an important issue and the understanding that women need *supporting to be safe* reappears later in the thesis. Finally, we saw that, though police

domestic violence policy has sometimes been shaped by ideas in the literature, more recent domestic violence developments seem to have occurred at *policy* level, specifically in the Home Office's crime prevention agenda. The discussion here was important because it highlighted that early responses to domestic violence were firmly grounded in women's liberation but that more recent developments are very much occurring in mainstream circles.

As we considered the organizations that might represent a more holistic approach to domestic violence, we saw that, though state agencies are increasingly recognizing that domestic violence is an issue and guidance about domestic violence has abounded, most service provision on domestic violence remains concentrated in specialist voluntary sector organizations, such as Women's Aid. The discussion here highlighted that the organizations responding to women and children are those that have their roots in the women's movement but that developments in domestic violence are happening at policy level.

Finally, we examined partnership approaches – in crime prevention and domestic violence. We saw the move to a more corporatist approach as we traced discourse on partnership approaches to crime prevention between 1980 and 1998 and saw that domestic violence has become increasingly grounded in the 'partnership orthodoxy' that characterizes the Home Office's crime prevention discourse. Then, examining crime prevention partnership approaches *in practice* in some early studies, we identified three main themes around which discussion has revolved: *attendance*, *structures* and *power*. We added another theme, *outcomes*, after our discussions on multi-agency approaches to domestic violence at a practical level, especially the research of Gill Hague and her colleagues. So, these four themes – attendance, structures, outcomes and power – provided the basis around which certain research questions, topics and problematics were organized. These research questions were set out here because they derived from the numerous interesting points raised in the literature on partnership approaches to both crime prevention and domestic violence.

The points raised in the literature on partnership approaches were used in developing the main research questions because each appears to merit greater examination. The points raised in the literature on partnership approaches in crime prevention were used because such points appear to need greater examination vis-à-vis partnership in *domestic violence*. The points raised in the literature on partnership approaches in domestic violence were used because a main issue that needs to be examined is whether the same points raised in Hague and colleagues' research are also raised in the current research. Finally, the points raised in the literature on partnership approaches in crime prevention and domestic violence were used in developing the main research questions because some such points raise more questions than they answer. Essentially, the points raised in the literature on partnership approaches and set out in the Chapter functioned as a resource that was used in developing the research questions.

Chapter Two contributes to the development of the research and the thesis on two main grounds. First, because it has set out a chronological account of the move to the multi-agency approach and domestic violence's increasingly grounding in a 'partnership orthodoxy' (a main aim of the thesis). More specifically, we have seen that early responses to domestic violence were grounded in women's liberation but that more recent developments have occurred in the Home Office's crime prevention agenda. We have also seen, that the organizations responding to women and children are those that have their roots in the women's movement but that developments on domestic violence

are increasingly happening in Home Office crime prevention circles. These issues are important to the researcher's argument that partnership initiatives are making little difference (again, developing this argument is a main aim of the thesis).

Secondly, because it has set out points and themes raised in the literature on partnership approaches. The points raised in the literature on partnership approaches and set out in the Chapter function as a resource that is used in developing the research questions.

Let us now move to consider the geographical areas in which the researcher's main questions have been examined before then considering the methods used in examining them.

Chapter Three – The Research Areas.

Chapter Three describes the areas in which the research has been undertaken, concentrating on the two areas that have been the focus of the research – fictitiously named Pittplace and Steelsite, which are situated in a small county fictitiously called Hillshire. Hillshire has four main areas, only two of which featured in the empirical research. Here, these two areas are described in general terms, considering each area's socio-economic characteristics; crime prevention traditions; and possible crime problem. Then, characteristics of each area in terms of domestic violence are described, considering the possible extent of the problem in each area and outlining the main services available to those experiencing domestic violence. Finally, multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in these areas are described. Mostly, background on each initiative is set out here – discussion on interesting issues about each initiative seen in the research period is reserved for Chapter Five. Chapter Three assume a role in developing the thesis because it sets out important information that readers need in reading through the remaining Chapters in the thesis.

1. Pittplace.

General Information.

The Metropolitan Borough of Pittplace covers an area of 127 square miles[52]. Pittplace is a town with a population of 226,700 – 0.59% of which are from ethnic minority backgrounds (Census 1991). In March 2000 to February 2001, the working-age employment rate in Pittplace was 69.7%, compared with 74.1% nationally (http://www.ons.gov.uk).

The Borough is split – to the west is a scenic, rural area: to the east is an urban industrial area, comprising towns and former mining villages, where nine out of ten Pittplace people live. In 1993 there were 91,687 households and 948 Council owned houses – 30% of the total with some 62% in private ownership. The economy in Pittplace used to centre on the coal mining industry but thousands of mining jobs have been lost since the 1980s. Much has been done to rebuild the Borough's economy and millions of pounds have been invested in Pittplace in a re-industrialisation strategy.

[52] To preserve anonymity, website references to these areas cannot be given. The information provided is taken from the areas' main sites.

Pittplace, Belleton and Millerton comprise the Hillshire Coalfields Health Action Zone[53].

In response to increasing concern about a perceived 'crimewave' in Pittplace, and especially within the Council in Pittplace, November 1996 heralded the development of the Pittplace Crime Prevention Partnership (PCPP) (Pittplace Crime Prevention Partnership 1997). Indeed, crime in Pittplace has been on the increase over the past decade. In 1979 crime levels were 25% below the national average – in 1996 crime levels had increased to 15% above the national average (Pittplace Community Safety Partnership 1998). Between June 1997 and July 1998 there were 23,540 crimes reported to Hillshire Police in the Borough (Pittplace Community Safety Partnership 1998). The PCPP was a voluntary organization, funded by the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), Pittplace Metropolitan Borough Council (PMBC) and Hillshire Police Authority.

In January 1999, the PCPP became the Pittplace Community Safety Partnership (PCSP), Pittplace's statutory partnership. The PMBC Chief Executive and the Hillshire Police Chief Constable share leadership of the PCSP[54]. The responsible authorities in the PCSP are the local authority and the police and the co-operating bodies are Hillshire Police Authority, Hillshire Probation and Pittplace Health Authority. The responsible authorities and co-operating bodies sit on a 'Partnership Policy Board' (PPB). Some persons and bodies prescribed by the Home Secretary as invitees to participate sit on the PPB – particularly, Victim Support Pittplace; the National Association for the Care & Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO); Voluntary Action Pittplace; and Hillshire People United Against Crime. Further persons and bodies prescribed by the Home Secretary as invitees to participate, and other persons and bodies, sit on other teams, panels and groups in the PCSP. Finally, a Pittplace MP chairs the PPB.

Domestic Violence in Pittplace.

Between 1996 and 1997 75 people presented themselves as homeless because of domestic violence and needed assistance from PMBC Housing Services. In 1997 the A&E department at Pittplace District General Hospital treated 326 women who were *known* to be victims of domestic violence. In 1997/98 Hillshire Police in Pittplace 'dealt

[53] The Health Action Zone (HAZ) is a partnership of Local Authorities, Health Authorities and other organizations, established to pioneer creative approaches to modernizing services and responding to social exclusion. The Hillshire HAZ is one of 11 first wave HAZs which officially started in April 1999. This HAZ covers the areas of Pittplace, Belleton and Millerton health and local authorities.
[54] See Appendix C for the structure of the PCSP.

with' 3,890 incidents of domestic violence – an increase of 342% over two years (Pittplace Community Safety Partnership 1998). Between March 1997 and April 1998 the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline received 471 telephone calls and offered 175 counselling appointments (Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline 1998) and in 1998 the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge housed 37 women and 56 children (Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge 1998). Appendix D shows the number of women and children using the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge between 1978 and 1998.

We can use the research set out in Chapter Two to estimate the possible extent of domestic violence in Pittplace. We can do this by taking the percentages of last year or life-time experiences of domestic violence suggested in the research set out and applying them to the number of adult females in Pittplace – 91,000 (http://www.ons.gov.uk). The first estimation set out in Table 3A, then, takes the percentage of last year experience suggested in the BCS – 5.9% – and applies it to 91,000 to estimate that 5,369 adult women in Pittplace experienced a physical assault and/or frightening threats in the last year.

TABLE 3A: *A Table Estimating The Possible Extent Of Domestic Violence In Pittplace, Taking The Percentages Of Last Year Or Life-Time Experiences Of Domestic Violence Suggested In The Research Set Out In Chapter Two And Applying Them To The Number Of Adult Females In Pittplace*[55].

Research Used.	**Abuse Measured.**	**Last Year Experience**	**Life-Time Experience**
British Crime Survey (1996)	Physical assault and/or frightening threats.	5,369	23,660
Mooney (1999)	Actual physical violence.	10,920	
Stanko et al. (1998)	Experienced domestic violence.	10,010	
Dominy and Radford (1996)	Experienced abuse that women themselves name 'domestic violence'.		28,210

As in most areas, there are few specialist[56] domestic violence services provided by the statutory sector in Pittplace and most of the specialist domestic violence support services are provided by the voluntary sector. The exception in the statutory sector is the Domestic Violence Officers (DVOs) – one in each of the two Hillshire Police divisions in the Borough.

There are two main voluntary sector organizations offering specialist services to those experiencing domestic violence in Pittplace – the Pittplace Domestic Violence

[55] We cannot use Painter and Farrington's (1998) research because these researchers divide between married and unmarried women.
[56] See Chapter Two.

Group/Helpline and the Women and Children's Refuge. The Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline has been in operation since 1995 and provides services to women and men affected by domestic violence. The main service provided is a telephone helpline that is open each weekday. The Group/Helpline also offers face-to-face counselling, a support group and Living Skills courses, which aim to increase confidence. In March 2001 the Group/Helpline secured funding from the Hillshire Police Authority Community Initiatives Programme (CIP)[57] and the Health Action Zone (HAZ) for a Drop in Centre and a Crèche. As the research period ended it was awaiting the outcome of bids to the CIP and Children in Need for a Youth Project. Finally, in April 2000 the Group secured National Lottery Charities Board (NLCB) funding for a Project Co-ordinator and an Administrative Worker. Funding for a Training Co-ordinator has also been secured from the Henry Smith Charity in London. The Group is affiliated to Women's Aid Federation England (WAFE).

The Women and Children's Refuge has been open since 1978. Originally there were three family rooms – as the research commenced, there was an additional single room, two bathrooms, laundry, kitchen, lounge and children's play/home-work area. Using BBC Children in Need funding, the garden has been made safe for women and children to use. Over the past 20 years the Refuge has accommodated 746 women and 1,482 children[58]. The Refuge is supervised by a Warden, funded by the PMBC Housing Department. The Refuge is, though, a charity and the running of the Refuge is carried out by a management committee. Since August 1997 the Refuge has had a CIP funded Development Worker. The Refuge offers "...a safe home, respite from physical harm, rest from emotional abuse, confidential help, counselling on how to cope, assistance in readjusting, advice if needed, emotional support links to other agencies..." (Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge 1998).

There are also a number of other organizations that provide services to those affected by domestic violence in the course of their wider service provision. NCH Action for Children has one family centre in Pittplace, which offers support services to women and children affected by domestic violence. Other organizations in the Borough include

[57] Hillshire Police Authority's Community Initiatives Programme (CIP) has provided £7.5 million in grant funding to 1,000 projects in the last 6 years to reduce crime and the fear of crime across Hillshire. The Police Authority and the Chief Constable launched the CIP in 1994/95 following the withdrawal of Urban Programme funding. They were concerned that some Urban Programme funded work, which had tackled factors associated with crime, would end without the funding. The CIP was a means of continuing to support established approaches to tackling crime and of developing new ones. The current CIP budgetary allocation of £1 million is similar to that which was made available in 1994/95.

[58] See Appendix D.

Victim Support, the Pittplace Sexual Abuse & Rape Crisis Helpline and the Young Women's Project.

The Multi-Agency Approach to Domestic Violence in Pittplace.

There are two multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in Pittplace – the Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group and the Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum.

The Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group.

The Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group (PDVTG) was convened under the Pittplace Crime Prevention Partnership's (PCPP) auspices in 1997. In 1996, a Pittplace Domestic Violence Strategy Group had been formed by women from the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline; Hillshire Probation Service; Pittplace Health Authority (Health Promotions); and Pittplace Metropolitan Borough Council (PMBC) housing services who considered there was a need for a "...more co-ordinated approach by both voluntary and statutory agencies in the Borough to the complex issues presented by domestic violence..." (Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline 1997). The Strategy Group undertook an audit of existing services and, in September 1996, produced a report, 'Home is Where the Hurt Is'. The Group presented the Report to organisations in the area, including the PCPP, which agreed that a 'Domestic Violence Topic Group' would become the first of a number of planned multi-agency topic groups that would operate under its auspices (Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline 1997).

Organizations were then invited to be involved in this new 'Topic Group' and, in April 1997, the first 'Crime Prevention Partnership Domestic Violence Topic Group' met[59]. When convened, the PDVTG soon established aims and objectives. The PDVTG's main area of work before the research period commenced was involvement with the Hillshire Domestic Violence Multi-Agency Working Group in planning a Hillshire domestic violence awareness raising campaign.

The Pittplace Domestic Violence Multi-Agency Forum.

The Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum (PMADVF) emerged in 1994. The PMADVF was established by the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline.

[59]Further information on the PDVTG is set out in Chapter Five, where the aims of all the multi-agency initiatives researched are discussed.

2. Steelsite.

General Information.

Steelsite is a city with a population of around 500,000 – 7% of whom are from ethnic minority backgrounds (Safer Steelsite Steering Group 1998). In recent times the city's traditional heavy industry has been in decline and much effort has been made towards diversification. In particular, these efforts have heralded the development of increased recreational and sporting facilities. These developments have led to increasing employment in service industries. However, unemployment remains a problem, with the level of unemployment remaining at 2% above the national average (Safer Steelsite Steering Group 1998). Out of 29 electoral wards in the city, in 1998 eight had a Local Deprivation Index of over twelve. A further eight had an Index of under three. In 1997, 65% of houses in the city were in private ownership – the Council owns most of the remainder. In seven of the city's inner-city wards over a third of households receive income support. Across the city one quarter of all dependent children reside in households with no regular wage earners (Safer Steelsite Steering Group 1998).

In terms of addressing crime – between July 1997 and June 1998 there were 52,683 crimes recorded by Hillshire Police for the City of Steelsite (Safer Steelsite Steering Group 1998) – Steelsite has a history of community safety initiatives. Steelsite City Council (SCC) has had a Community Safety Unit for more than a decade and in 1994 a Safer Cities Project was undertaken in the city. Funding for much of the city's community safety work, whether issue or area based, has come from the Hillshire Police Authority CIP. The SRB has been another funding source (Safer Steelsite Steering Group 1998). Finally, in response to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Safer Steelsite Steering Group (SSSG) was formed. The Chief Executive for the SCC and the Hillshire Police Chief Constable share leadership of the SSSG[60]. The responsible authorities in the SSSG are the local authority and the police and the co-operating bodies are Hillshire Police Authority, Hillshire Probation and Steelsite Health Authority. Some bodies prescribed by the Home Secretary as invitees to participate sit on the SSSG – Steelsite Magistrates Court; the Crown Prosecution Service; Steelsite Drugs Action Team (DAT); Steelsite Youth Offending Team; and Steelsite University.

[60] See Appendix E for the structure of the SSSG.

Domestic Violence in Steelsite.

During two months in 1998 25% of child protection cases in Steelsite had domestic violence as a significant factor (Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum 1999, 2000). Also, in 1997 SCC re-housed 394 women because of domestic violence – 87 of these were experiencing violence from a partner with whom they were not living at the time (Safer Steelsite Steering Group 1998). Between November 1997 and November 1998 the Beta Domestic Violence Project[61] in the City offered 'support' to 393 women and received 15 new referrals. The Project undertook 130 home visits (Beta Domestic Violence Project 1998).

Again, we can use the research set out in Chapter Two to estimate the possible extent of domestic violence in Steelsite by taking the percentages of last year or life-time experiences of domestic violence suggested in the research set out and applying them to the number of adult females in Steelsite – 214,000 (http://www.ons.gov.uk). The first estimation, then, takes the percentage of last year experience suggested in the BCS – 5.2% – and applies it to 214,000 to estimate that 12,626 adult women in Steelsite experienced a physical assault and/or frightening threats in the last year.

TABLE 3B: *A Table Estimating The Possible Extent Of Domestic Violence In Steelsite, Taking The Percentages Of Last Year Or Life-Time Experiences Of Domestic Violence Suggested In The Research Set Out In Chapter Two And Applying Them To The Number Of Adult Females In Steelsite.*

Research Used.	**Abuse Measured.**	**Last Year Experience**	**Life-Time Experience**
British Crime Survey (1996)	Physical assault and/or frightening threats.	12,626	55,640
Mooney (1999)	Actual physical violence.	25,680	
Stanko et al. (1998)	Experienced domestic violence.	23,540	
Dominy and Radford (1996)	Experienced abuse that women themselves name 'domestic violence'.		66,340

Again, there are few specialist domestic violence services provided by the statutory sector. There are DVOs in each Hillshire Police division in Steelsite, though most of these also have responsibility for victim care and/or racial harassment. Also, in April 1999 SCC passed its first policy on domestic violence. However, it is those organizations in the voluntary sector that offer the most specialist service provision. In terms of accommodation services, there are three refuge organizations in the city.

□ Steelsite Women's Aid is the longest established organization, providing advice, support and safe accommodation over two refuges. As well as its refuge workers,

[61] Throughout the thesis, fictitious names are used to describe organizations that could be identified using their proper names.

Women's Aid offers children's workers, an outreach worker and an aftercare worker. It depends on the work of volunteers to provide twenty-four hour cover through a bleeper system.

□ Omega Women's Refuge, now affiliated to the WAFE, also provides advice, support and safe accommodation. Again, it offers specialist children's workers and outreach workers and there is some overnight cover.

□ Psi Women's Refuge – the Asian Women's Refuge. The Psi Women's Refuge only takes referrals from outside Steelsite, though it does refer local women to Asian refuges outside the city. It also provides a Steelsite based helpline and a number of community languages are offered.

Accommodation with support is also provided by the Young Women's Housing Project, which offers services specifically to young women who have been sexually abused. Finally, the Council Homeless Section's Direct Access Hostel provides a 24-hour emergency service for women without children.

There are three community based domestic violence projects that have developed in certain areas of the city over recent years:

□ The Alpha Domestic Violence Project provides telephone support; home visits; accompanied visits; and a referral system. The Project also offers a support group – 'Women Working It Out'. It has had a part-time worker for three years and received funding for new workers in the research period.

□ The Beta Domestic Violence Project has been established for over five years. The Project provides telephone support; home visits; and a referral service and also offers a 'Women Talking to Women' support group. The Project employed two specialist children's workers in the research period.

□ Finally, the Gamma Domestic Violence Project covers a large area of the city. It offers services to women and men who have experienced domestic violence and is developing services for children with a new free-phone helpline for children and young people.

Figures 3A and 3B outline the main features of these services.

Figure 3A: *Tables Detailing Features Of Specialist Domestic Violence Accommodation Services in Steelsite*[62].

Steelsite Women's Aid.

Average Number of Users per annum (P/A)	Accommodation 100 Support 200
Average Number at One Time	16-20
Average Number of Children & Young People P/A	200
Average Number at One Time	25
Number of Paid Staff	8 Part-time
Staff to Work With Children	3
Number of Volunteers	3
Main Sources of Funding	NLCB Local Authority Housing Corporation Rental Income Charitable Trusts

Omega Women's Refuge.

Average Number of Users P/A	Accommodation 120 Support 130
Average Number at One Time	16
Average Number of Children & Young People P/A	200
Average Number at One Time	18
Number of Paid Staff	8 Part-time
Staff to Work With Children	2
Number of Volunteers	2
Main Sources of Funding	NLCB Local Authority Housing Corporation Rental Income

Psi Women's Refuge.

Average Number of Users P/A	Accommodation 20 Other 200
Average Number at One Time	20
Average Number of Children & Young People P/A	45
Average Number at One Time	25
Number of Paid Staff	5
Staff to Work With Children	0
Number of Volunteers	4 – Help-line
Main Sources of Funding	NLCB Local Authority SRB Rental Income

Young Women's Housing Project.

Average Number of Users P/A	Accommodation 20 Other 50
Average Number at One Time	16-20
Average Number of Children & Young People P/A	ALL - young women 6 under 5 babies
Average Number at One Time	4
Number of Paid Staff	4 Part-time
Staff to Work With Children	0
Number of Volunteers	1
Main Sources of Funding	NLCB Local Authority Housing Corporation

[62] This information was taken from the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum's Multi-Agency Strategy (1999). It is based on questionnaire responses from specialist domestic violence services in the city.

	Rental Income Charitable Trusts

Figure 3B *Tables Detailing Features of Specialist Domestic Violence Support Services in Steelsite*[63].

Alpha Domestic Violence Project

Average Number of Users P/A	Women 30
Average Number at One Time	10
Average Number of Children & Young People P/A	No Direct Services
Average Number at One Time	
Number of Paid Staff	3 Part-time
Staff to Work With Children	0
Number of Volunteers	
Main Sources of Funding	NLCB Local Authority. Charitable Trusts

Beta Domestic Violence Project

Average Number of Users P/A	Women 40
Average Number at One Time	30
Average Number of Children & Young People P/A	Developing Services
Average Number at One Time	
Number of Paid Staff	5 Part-time
Staff to Work With Children	2 New Staff
Number of Volunteers	3
Main Sources of Funding	NLCB CIP Charitable Trusts

Gamma Domestic Violence Project

Average Number of Users P/A	Women 110 Men 4
Average Number at One Time	35
Average Number of Children & Young People P/A	Developing Services
Average Number at One Time	
Number of Paid Staff	1 Full-time 5 Part-time
Staff to Work With Children	0
Number of Volunteers	20
Main Sources of Funding	NLCB SRB CIP

There are also a number of other organizations that provide services to those affected by domestic violence in the course of their wider service provision, described in Appendix F.

The Multi-Agency Approach to Domestic Violence in Steelsite.

The Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum.

The Steelsite Inter-Agency Domestic Violence Group – since called the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum (SDVF) – was established by the Community Safety Unit of the SCC in 1992. Over the past five years the SDVF has had certain "...work

[63] This information was taken from the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum's Multi-Agency Strategy (1999). It is based on questionnaire responses from specialist domestic violence services in the city.

priorities..." (personal communication, SDVF co-ordinator), centred on training, children, "...support for frontline and anti-oppressive work..." (SDVF 1998), developing a multi-agency strategy on domestic violence and "...information sharing..." (SDVF 1997, 1998, 1999)[64].

Training.

In 1997 the SDVF launched a training strategy, to be overseen through a SDVF training sub-group. Community Health Steelsite (CHS) then commissioned health visitor training sessions between November 1997 and March 1998. These sessions contained awareness raising training and skills programmes and were devised with the Steelsite Women Against Violence Network (WAVN)[65]. Also, over 1996/97, CIP funded multi-agency domestic violence awareness training sessions were undertaken with, inter alia, black workers and workers based in the City centre. Further SDVF organized multi-agency awareness raising training sessions were undertaken between September and November 1998 – some specifically with black women workers. Again, WAVN trainers delivered the training. Plans over 1997/98 to deliver joint SDVF/Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) multi-agency training on domestic violence and child protection were realized in February and March 1999 when an, ACPC funded and WAVN and ACPC delivered, training programme was piloted. The domestic violence and child protection training programme was repeated in June 1999, when the research period commenced.

Children.

Another main SDVF work priority has been children. Since 1996/97, the SDVF has been involved in the 'Respect Project' with Action Against Men's Violence Steelsite (AAMVS), part of which was to write a resource pack to support work with children and young people. Seemingly, work on the Respect Project commenced around the summer of 1998, when a SDVF children and young people sub-group was founded to compose the resource pack, examine present services and propose some "...primary preventative work..." (SDVF 1999) with children and young people. Meanwhile, the Respect Project began to pilot the use of circle time and drama to raise issues around

[64] Work priorities over five years are covered here since 1996/1997 was the earliest full year in which the SDVF employed paid workers. Also, in discussing the SDVF's 'work priorities', we draw on SDVF documentation – annual reports; newsletters; and minutes. Most such documentation only appeared around 1996 – the earliest year covered in an annual report was 1995/1996 and SDVF newsletters appeared in November/December 1997.

[65] The Women Against Violence Network is an umbrella organization for domestic violence organizations in Steelsite.

domestic violence with children and young people in schools and community groups. By early 1999 the sub-group had founded two task groups – one to compose the resource pack, funded through the City Council's Young Children's Service, and one to examine children's services.

"...**Support For Frontline And Anti-Oppressive Work**..." (SDVF 1998).

In 1997, a 'Women's Support Section' was convened in the SDVF "...to encourage mutual support and act as a reference group to raise issues in the wider SDVF..." (SDVF 1997). Originally, the Women's Support Section convened bi-monthly. When the research period commenced, it convened quarterly over lunchtime, attended by those working around domestic violence in the voluntary sector.

Also, the SDVF "...continues to support the established city-wide [domestic violence] organizations and community based projects, as well as new initiatives in the City..." (SDVF 1998). In its 1998/99 Annual Report, the SDVF also announced plans to work with women in an area of Steelsite not covered by a community based support project. Finally, in 1996/97, the SDVF embraced an equal opportunities policy and determined that SDVF attendees develop anti-oppressive work practices. Also, in May 1998 research that examined prostitution, substance abuse and domestic violence, commissioned by the SDVF, the Steelsite Drugs Action Team and Prostitution Forum and undertaken by the Society of Voluntary Associates (SOVA), was published in a prostitution conference. Finally, in 1997/98 the SDVF's co-ordinator worked with a group of traveller women and their health visitor to develop worker guidance on supporting abused travellers, published by CHS.

Developing A Multi-Agency Strategy.

A main work priority of the SDVF has been the development of a 'Multi-Agency Strategy on Domestic Abuse'[66].

"...**Information Sharing**..." (SDVF 1997, 1998, 1999).

The final main work priority of the SDVF is "...information sharing through mailings and presentations at Full Forum meetings; distribution of the lilac manual for workers and other briefings and information resources; dealing with requests for advice from frontline workers in statutory and voluntary agencies; fundraising and submitting

[66] Since much of the work on this strategy took place in the research period, it is discussed in Chapter Five.

monitoring information to our main funder, and supporting member organizations with their bids..." (SDVF 1999).

Looking first at mailings, over the research period, 136 individuals, organizations and agencies received 'Forum mailings', usually bi-monthly. The August 1999 Forum mailing, when the research observation period commenced, contained:

- a copy of the SDVF's Newsletter;
- a copy of SCC's Domestic Violence Policy;
- some Steelsite domestic violence contact cards;
- notice of the SDVF's Annual General Meeting; and
- notes from a WAVN meeting (just to WAVN members).

The SDVF Newsletter contained within these mailings was born in November 1997, "...arising out of a tight budget and a sneaking suspicion..." (SDVF 1997) that meeting minutes remained unread. The November 1997 SDVF newsletter discussed SDVF work on five issues – funding; training; prostitution, drugs and violence; information resources; working with violent men; and the 'Women's Direct Access Hostel'. Finally, the newsletter advertised and encouraged assistance with a Hillshire public awareness campaign on domestic violence and listed where and when SDVF meetings over the forthcoming three months would be convened.

The SDVF holds bi-monthly Full Forum meetings that involve "...presentations and information sharing slots..." (SDVF 1999). Indeed, Full Forum meetings immediately before the research observation period, November 1998; February 1999; and April 1999, contained presentations on work with domestic violence perpetrators; the work of the Steelsite Alcohol Advisory Service and the work of Steelsite Victim Support; and the Protection From Harassment Act 1997 and the Family Law Act 1996.

The 'lilac manual' is a 'workers' information and guidance manual', produced in 1995, with CIP and Hillshire Probation Service funding. The lilac manual is "...aimed at workers who come into contact with women experiencing domestic violence..." (SDVF 1995). It examines "...what is domestic violence?..."; how domestic violence is experienced; and "...good practice..." (SDVF 1995) on domestic violence service provision. It discusses "...issues affecting particular women..." (SDVF 1995), covering black women; younger women; older women; women with disabilities; lesbian women; gypsy/traveller women; and women working in prostitution, and discusses issues around children; health; the law; housing; and money matters. Finally, it describes those Steelsite agencies and organizations that women can approach. The lilac manual has been followed by other information resources, especially publications

specifically for women experiencing domestic violence. In 1995 the SDVF produced a CIP funded booklet – 'Stopping Domestic Violence Steelsite'. It "...provides some basic information to women and children affected by domestic abuse, so that [they] can make [their] own decisions about [their] situation, and know who [they] can approach for help and support..." (SDVF 1999). Specifically, the booklet explains domestic violence; discusses issues around housing, health, police responses, benefits, the law and children; and details those Steelsite agencies and organizations which women can approach. The booklet is available in Braille and on tape and in community languages such as Urdu, Bengali, Arabic, Somali and Cantonese. Also, since 1996 the SDVF has produced small domestic violence contact cards that list the telephone numbers of those Steelsite agencies.

Finally, another recent work priority has been the Hillshire wide domestic violence awareness raising campaign. Though the SDVF had funding to plan a 'Zero Tolerance' campaign, over 1996/97 it became involved with the Hillshire Domestic Violence Multi-Agency Working Group in planning a Hillshire domestic violence awareness raising campaign.

For completeness, a short description of the two other local authority areas in Hillshire is now provided[67].

3. Belleton.

Belleton is a Town with an estimated population in 1999 of 292,100[68]. Unemployment in Belleton remains a problem, with the level of unemployment positioned at 11.4%.

Much of Belleton's specialist domestic violence service provision comes from Belleton Women's Aid. Belleton Women's Aid offers individual appointments; an advice telephone line; temporary refuge accommodation for women and children experiencing domestic violence; and outreach clinics in areas around Belleton. The Belleton Rape & Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre provides counselling, support and information to women who have experienced sexual abuse. Finally, the main specialist statutory service is from the police Domestic Violence Officers (DVOs) – there are three in Belleton.

[67] These two areas are also referred to using fictitious names, Belleton and Millerton.
[68] See Footnote 51.

There are two multi-agency initiatives in the town – the Belleton Domestic Violence Working Party and the Belleton Crime and Disorder Partnership's Domestic Violence Sub-Group.

4. Millerton.

Millerton is a Town with a population that increased by 1,278 or 0.5% between 1981 and 1991 from 250,359 to 251,637. The level of unemployment remains at 3% above the national average at 7.3% with the level of long term unemployment comparable with the national average at 23.2%. Finally, in 1996 30.4% of households in the Borough received income support.

Millerton has a refuge. There is also a project – 'Choices and Options' – that offers practical and emotional support to women experiencing domestic violence. Another project works within the Asian community around issues of family violence. The NSPCC Domestic Violence Family Support Project offers therapy and counselling for women and children affected by domestic violence. Finally, a voluntary and statutory sector partnership group is developing a helpline. The main specialist statutory service is from the police DVOs – there are two in Millerton.

There are two multi-agency initiatives in Millerton – the Millerton Domestic Violence Forum and the Domestic Violence Task Group of the Millerton Crime and Disorder Strategy.

5. Hillshire – The Multi-Agency Approach To Domestic Violence.

As well as the multi-agency initiatives in each local area, Hillshire itself has multi-agency domestic violence activity.

Responding to a Home Office Circular 60/90, in 1991 Hillshire Police launched a Strategy on Domestic Violence. Part of this Strategy was to establish a county-wide multi-agency working group and the Hillshire Domestic Violence Working Group (HDVWG) was established in 1991. The HDVWG is:

> "...made up of representatives of the Pittplace, Belleton, Millerton and Steelsite domestic violence forums as well as Hillshire Police, Hillshire Probation Service, Hillshire Victim Support and Hillshire Police Authority..." (HDVWG Minutes 16.6.99).

Though the plan had been that delegated attendees represent their forums, Pittplace, Belleton, Millerton and Steelsite multi-agency initiatives are increasingly represented in HDVWG meetings by their co-ordinators. Hillshire Police have been represented by a Chief Inspector based at Police Headquarters. Hillshire Probation Service has also

attended and is represented by a manager with responsibility for domestic violence in Steelsite Probation. Finally, Hillshire Police Authority has been active in the HDVWG and has provided it with administrative and secretarial support.

Following a time without a chair, the HDVWG has agreed to rotate the chair between the four initiatives with each holding it for a year.

In its constitution, adopted in 1997, the HDVWG describes its purposes:

a) to provide an opportunity for the four local domestic violence forums and relevant county-wide agencies to meet and work jointly around issues of domestic violence which are of common concern or interest;
b) to exchange information and good practice and undertake appropriate initiatives which seek to address domestic violence in Hillshire and which support the work of the four local domestic violence forums.

In 1996 the HDVWG organised a conference attended by each area initiative and in the research period hosted a session where the Leeds Inter-Agency Project (LIAP) gave a presentation.

A main area of work for the HDVWG in recent years has been a CIP funded, Hillshire wide Awareness Raising Campaign that was launched in February 1998 in Belleton, Millerton, Pittplace and Steelsite and closed on 28 March 1998 – the Just Stop It Campaign. Each area initiative assisted in developing the Campaign through the HDVWG. A number of posters and fliers were designed for the campaign. These differed across the county to include local sources of information, such as emergency telephone numbers. In each area a booklet was produced that outlined issues such as police powers and the legal situation regarding domestic violence. The booklets were designed for women experiencing domestic violence and information was again area specific.

This Chapter has described the two areas that have been the focus of the research, Pittplace and Steelsite. Pittplace and Steelsite were described in general terms to give readers general information to illustrate both the context in which the research has been based and the need for public service assistance, generally and in terms of domestic violence. It is probable that where women normally depend on public service provision, this reliance will be increased when facing domestic violence – though not all women needing domestic violence services will be economically deprived or depend on public service provision. Nonetheless, high deprivation levels in an area will tend to have a special effect on the need for public service assistance in times of crisis (Stanko et al. 1998). Readers need information, then, about the need for public service assistance in

each area[69]. Also, given the increasing focus on the multi-agency approach to crime prevention, readers need information on the area's crime prevention history and, given recent statutory developments, on the emerging local statutory partnerships.

Characteristics of Pittplace and Steelsite in terms of domestic violence were also set out because readers also need information on domestic violence in these areas, especially on possible local extent and local service provision. On possible extent, Ferrante et al. argue that "...measurement is essential for proper policy debate and rational development of strategies and allocation of resources..." (1996: 5). Certainly, as Maguire (1997) notes, policy initiatives responding to certain crimes tend to be supported by arguments based on numerical representations of the 'scale of the problem'. Statistics about possible extent are also used to raise awareness about domestic violence in policy circles, to give it increased standing in these circles. Such measurements also provide some understanding of the demand for services from both the voluntary and statutory sector. Further, unless the possible extent of domestic violence in known, it becomes almost impossible to begin the process of establishing programmes to address it. Finally, another value of measuring domestic violence is that it enables a proper assessment of the distribution of domestic violence throughout the community to be made (Ferrante et al. 1996; Mirlees-Black 1999).

So, readers *do* need information about the possible extent of domestic violence in Pittplace and Steelsite but, as seen in Chapter Two, any information about possible extent must be regarded with caution. Often, such information shows what we *do* know about the extent of domestic violence but does not show all we *could* know.

Finally, readers need information about service provision in Pittplace and Steelsite. Clearly, having seen in Chapter Two the services and service provision that *could* be available, information about service provision is valuable in highlighting the services that *are* available. Indeed, reflecting on the information about local service provision, it seems that there are gaps in Pittplace. Pittplace has just one refuge[70] and no Women's Aid organization. There are no specialist services centred on ethnic minority women, though there are specialist rape and sexual abuse services and children's services through NCH Action for Children. There are fewer gaps in Steelsite – it has three refuges, including an Asian women's refuge. Steelsite also has a 25 year-old Women's

[69] A full description of how socio-economic characteristics impact on the need for public service assistance is outside the scope of this chapter but see Hanmer and Saunders (1984); Smith (1989); Mirlees-Black (1999); and Hague and Malos (1998) for consideration of whether domestic violence is a problem concentrated in lower socio-economic groups.

[70] Though, throughout the research period, a PDVTG output has centred on developing another refuge.

Aid organization and has three community based support organizations, two offering outreach provision through helplines and home visits and one offering such to provision to children and young people.

Readers also need information about service provision in Pittplace and Steelsite because, again having seen in Chapter Two the statutory versus voluntary dichotomy in specialist service provision on domestic violence, such information is valuable in that it emphasizes this dichotomy. Finally, by outlining the service providers in the research areas, some idea is given about those organizations that *could* be involved in local multi-agency domestic violence approaches.

Summarising, Pittplace and Steelsite were described in general terms in Chapter Three, before characteristics of each area in terms of domestic violence were set out. Here, the possible extent of the problem in each area was suggested and the main services available to those experiencing domestic violence were outlined. Finally, multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence in Pittplace and Steelsite were described. The researcher sees that Chapter Three is important in developing the thesis because it has set out important information that readers need in reading through the remaining Chapters in the thesis.

Chapter Four – Methods.

As Chapter Two drew to a close, we identified four main themes around which literature discussion on partnership approaches has revolved – *attendance*, *structures*, *power* and *outcomes*. These four themes then provided the basis around which certain research questions were organized. Readers might remember that the points raised in the literature on partnership approaches and organized under these themes functioned as a resource that was used in developing these research questions. Having considered the areas in which these research questions have been examined, the main methods used in examining them might now be examined.

First, the methods that might have used in the Hillshire research are set out. Here, we will see that the life history or qualitative interviews might have been used to explore women's experience. We will also see that no women were interviewed through life history or qualitative interviews because it seemed questionable that enough women could have been accessed and their safety ensured with the resources available. We will see that self-completion questionnaires could also have been used, possibly to access *each* Hillshire multi-agency domestic violence initiative attendee but that problems with such questionnaires, most obviously their low response rate, caused the researcher to deem them an unsuitable method.

Secondly, the methods that were used in Hillshire are set out, first participant observation. Readers will see that, since the researcher had as a concern the 'experience of Hillshire multi-agency domestic violence initiative attendees, the way that they think, feel and act', a main method used in the research has been participant observation. How participant observation seemed a good method to use in examining the research questions empirically is then discussed, as is the main problem in using it as a method in this examination. Consideration will be given to how participant observation was used to examine the research questions empirically. Here, readers will see that, as is common, the researcher assumed just one participant observation role – the participant-as-observer role. The role that the researcher assumed, including problems encountered and decisions taken, will be discussed in detail here.

Next, readers will see that most participant observers use a triangulation method and that the researcher was no exception here. Consideration will be given to the other methods of data collection used, beginning on the use of documents and then moving to qualitative interviewing. Initially, the structured and unstructured interview are

discussed, before the main reasons why the semi-structured interview seemed the most appropriate method to use in Pittplace and Steelsite are set out. Readers will see that semi-structured interviews were chosen, essentially because these interviews encourage interviewees to voice their real feelings. Consideration will again be given to how semi-structured interviews were used to examine the research questions empirically – the questions that were posed in interviews to explore these questions are also set out, as, inter alia, are the number of interviews conducted; other sampling points; and a table that sets out information on the individuals interviewed. Finally, the importance of using both observations and interviews is discussed. Here, readers will see that the importance of using both sources in Hillshire centred on issues around 'confirmation' and 'completeness'.

Having considered the main methods used in examining the research questions, the Chapter draws to a close by examining the ethical issues that have governed the research in Hillshire.

Let us now move to think about the methods that might have used in the Hillshire research.

1. The Research Methods.

The methods that might have been used in the Hillshire research include questionnaires, the life history, participant observation, qualitative interviews and focus groups. The life history, described as "...the perfect type of sociological material..." (Thomas and Znaniecki, quoted in Plummer 1983: 64), or qualitative interviews such as unstructured or focus group interviews might have been used to explore women's experiences. Women's experiences are essential in research on domestic violence and these experiences cannot be forgotten. Nonetheless, no women were interviewed through life history, unstructured or focus group interviews in the Hillshire research. Though a main research concern has centred on multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence vis-à-vis service provision on domestic violence and, through interviewing women, this concern could have been explored, it seemed questionable that enough women could be accessed with whom to explore this issue fully. Women could have been accessed through Hillshire refuges or support organizations. Although, as discussed soon, *volunteers* could not be accessed through refuges or support organizations. Perhaps, the problems the researcher encountered in accessing volunteers might have been encountered in accessing women too? Further, it seemed questionable that women using the police, housing services, et cetera could also have been accessed. Certainly, it seemed

questionable that the researcher could have accessed women using these services and then approached them and, importantly, ensured their *safety* with the resources available.

The researcher also decided not to use the self-completion questionnaire method. Self-completion questionnaires, such as postal questionnaires, progress through a standardized format. Questions are pre-coded and closed. Questionnaires have certain advantages. They are cheap and quick to send out and are a popular method to use in gathering the opinions of big populations. Certainly, postal questionnaires could have been used to gather the opinions of possibly *each* Hillshire domestic violence multi-agency initiative attendee. Nonetheless, the researcher deemed the self-completion questionnaire an unsuitable method on numerous grounds, not least because questionnaires produce a much lower response rate that comparable interview-based methods – some postal questionnaires achieve no more than a 20% response rate (see Simmons 2001). As seen, main research questions have centred on attendance on Hillshire domestic violence multi-agency initiatives. The researcher hoped to access attendees' opinions on their attendance on such initiatives, especially on their *non-attendance* – why did some not attend each initiative meeting et cetera. The likelihood seemed to be that practitioners not attending each meeting such, whose opinions the researcher hoped to access, would not respond to a questionnaire.

Having discounted these other methods, the main methods used in the present research have been participant observation and qualitative interviewing.

Participant Observation.

Jack Douglas has said that:

> "...when one's concern is the experience of people, the way that they think, feel and act, the most truthful, reliable, complete and simple way of getting that information is to share their experience..." (1976: 112).

'Sharing their experience' has come to mean observation 'in situ' – participant observation – to gain access to the "...meanings which participants assign to social situations..." (Burgess 1991: 79). Since the present researcher had as a concern the 'experience of Hillshire multi-agency domestic violence initiative attendees, the way that they think, feel and act', a main method used in the research has been participant observation.

Participant observation seemed a good method to use in examining numerous research questions, topics and problematics. First, on attendance – who sits around the multi-

agency table, when they sit around the table and how they sit around the table. Being a participant observer could accord the researcher the opportunity to observe which agencies and organizations attend multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in Hillshire. Likewise, through being a participant observer, the researcher could see for herself whether poor and changing membership characterized attendance on Hillshire initiatives – which agencies did not attend or did not attend consistently; which *meetings* were poorly attended; what did poor and changing membership mean; how was it experienced? Also, on how agencies sit around the multi-agency table, participant observation centres on gathering data on *social interaction* – the researcher could observe at first hand whether there was conflict in initiatives and whether there were 'very difficult situations'.

Secondly, participant observation seemed a good method to use in examining research questions about multi-agency domestic violence structures. Certainly, on questions about 'confusion, duplication and competition', participant observation could bring an opportunity to examine structures in *practice* not in *principle*. Also, on questions about informality, participant observation could bring an opportunity to examine whether there was informal liaison before and after meetings. Being a participant observer could give the researcher a chance to gain access to the time before and after meetings and to a time that would not have been recorded in initiative documents and that perhaps would not have been described by research interviewees as a different time to the meetings. Finally, how each initiative researched experienced changing membership could be examined through the researcher being a participant observer.

Thirdly, it seemed a good method to use in examining questions on multi-agency initiatives' outputs. The researcher could see for herself the work such initiatives did. Also, on what initiatives' outputs *mean* – initiatives' outcomes. A participant observer can obtain accounts of situations in the participants' language. This accords the researcher an opportunity to collect the different versions of events that are available; the opportunity to compare these accounts with each other; and the opportunity to compare them with other observations being made in the field of study. As Burgess says:

> "...researchers can utilize their observations together with their theoretical insights to make seemingly irrational or paradoxical behaviour comprehensible to those within and beyond the situation that is studied..." (1991: 79).

Through being a participant observer, the researcher could begin to understand whether and how, for example, multi-agency domestic violence initiatives become ends in themselves and, more, *why* initiatives become such.

Fourthly, it seemed a good method to use in examining questions on power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches.

As seen in Chapter Two, the researcher had two main questions on power. First, what is power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches? Secondly, what are the consequences of having power in such approaches? As a participant observer, the researcher could see for herself who 'prevailed in the definition of needs and problems'. Was it statutory agencies or those with more resources or those with specialism in domestic violence? Did certain agencies and organizations appear to prevail in other ways?

Possibly, the main problem in participant observation as a method to examine the research questions empirically centred on 'coverage'. As a participant observer in multi-agency initiatives, the researcher gained access to these initiative attendees' meanings but did not access numerous others' meanings. A main research topic has been is and how is organizational service provision affected as agencies and organizations attend multi-agency domestic violence initiatives? The researcher could access initiative attendees' meanings on this issue and explore attendees' 'multi-agency experience' but could not access others' in their agencies – inter alia, did others in attendees' agencies 'think, feel and act' in a manner comparable to initiative attendees?

How was participant observation used to examine the research questions empirically? Gold (1958) has distinguished four participant observer roles:

- the complete participant. The complete participant is a covert observer, concealing the observer dimension in the role and becoming a fully functioning member of the social setting.
- The participant-as-observer. Not only does the participant-as-observer not conceal her investigation, but she makes clear that research is her main interest – that she is there *to* observe (Roy 1970).
- The observer-as-participant. This role is seen as the researcher's contact with 'the observed' is brief. There is some observation but little participation.
- The complete observer. The complete observer "...merely stands back and 'eavesdrops' on the proceedings..." (Waddington 1999: 108).

As is common (see Burgess 1991), the researcher used just one participant observation role – the participant-as-observer role. The other participant observation roles did not seem appropriate. The complete participant role seemed both problematic and unrealistic. The role is problematic in that covert observation transgresses ethical

principles – it does not ensure informed consent and it is deceptive[71]. The complete participant role is also problematic in meaning the researcher might 'go native'[72]. Further, the role seemed unrealistic in the Hillshire research because it seemed questionable that the researcher could realistically attend initiative meetings in neighbouring areas as an 'attendee' (an agency representative) and not as a researcher. Likewise, the observer-as-participant role does not, because the encounters that characterize it are so brief, give the researcher access to the meanings that participants use in social situations. Certainly, through assuming a participant-as-observer role, the researcher could gain some understanding of, and observe the meanings 'the observed' gave to, their social world. This seemed a main issue in understanding multi-agency domestic violence initiatives.

Resource and time considerations rather determined which Hillshire multi-agency domestic violence initiatives could be observed. The researcher had neither the resources nor the time to observe each Hillshire initiative and decided that the Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group (PDVTG); the Pittplace Domestic Violence Multi-Agency Forum (PMADVF); and the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum (SDVF) would be observed. Beginning in December 1998 the researcher assumed a participant observer role in the PDVTG; in April 1999 assumed such a role in the PMADVF; and in June 1999 assumed such a role in the SDVF. The researcher attended seven PDVTG meetings; five PMADVF meetings and six SDVF Full Forum meetings. The researcher also attended other social settings in these initiatives. Doing this characterizes the participant-as-observer role. As per Roy:

> "...the participant-as-observer is not tied down, he is free to run around as research interests beckon; he may move as the spirit listeth..." (1970: 217).

So, the researcher:

- attended a gathering where a domestic violence drama initiative was being piloted to PDVTG attendees;
- attended a PDVTG 'workshop' to examine the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in Pittplace;
- attended a conference on domestic violence for Pittplace health practitioners, organized by the Pittplace District General Hospital NHS Trust representative on the PDVTG and the PMADVF;
- attended some SDVF Management Committee meetings;

[71] Ethical principles are discussed more fully below.

[72] Certainly, as per Burgess, complete participants might "...play their roles so effectively that they will 'go native' (1991: 81). More broadly, 'going native' is seen as ethnographers "...lose their sense of being a researcher and become wrapped up in the world view of the people they are studying..." (Bryman 2001: 300). Clearly, a researcher who has 'gone native' might no longer gather observations or record the observations made.

- attended the SDVF Annual General Meeting;
- attended a conference on community safety, hosted by Steelsite's statutory partnership, the Safer Steelsite Steering Group (SSSG);
- attended some meetings of a Hillshire-wide multi-agency domestic violence initiatives, the Hillshire Domestic Violence Working Group (HDVWG);
- attended the launch of the Hillshire Domestic Violence Working Group's 'Just Stop It' awareness raising campaign.;
- attended the National Domestic Violence Officers' Conference, hosted by Hillshire Police;
- held meetings with the SDVF co-ordinator, the HDVWG secretary, the PCSP Director and the SSSG 'co-ordinator'; and
- held a meeting with a senior Hillshire Police officer, based at Hillshire Police Headquarters, with special responsibility for domestic violence.

The researcher did not, though, 'shadow' initiative attendees in their work settings. Though shadowing such might have accorded the researcher the opportunity to explore research questions around multi-agency domestic violence initiatives vis-à-vis attendees' service provision, it did not seem a feasible method to use.

Clearly, having decided not to assume a covert role, and because initiative meetings are closed (Bell 1969) and not public (Hammersely and Atkinson 1995), the researcher had to gain access to them. Knowing that the PDVTG was a 'topic group' in Pittplace's Crime Prevention Partnership (PCPP), the researcher approached the PCPP co-ordinator and representative on the PDVTG to gain access to PDVTG meetings. Likewise, the researcher approached the PMADVF Chair to gain access to PMADVF meetings and the SDVF co-ordinator to gain access to SDVF meetings. It would have been better to approach each initiative's Chair to gain access to initiative meetings. However, the multi-agency approach is rather opaque to outsiders – until one is in a multi-agency setting it is sometimes hard to know who is who. So, it seemed more appropriate to approach the 'visible people', like co-ordinators, to gain access and *then*, once gained, discuss that access with Chairs. Certainly, Bryman (2001) recommends that participant observers gain a 'sponsor' or use people as 'gatekeepers' to gain access. Access, though, is not a one-off occurrence in participant observation and has to be continually negotiated. Issues around access only seemed a problem once in the Hillshire research. Main research questions have centred on multi-agency structures, especially on informality before and after meetings. Once, in the PDVTG, the researcher was observing time before a meeting and jotting down her thoughts. Seemingly, one attendee was uncomfortable, deeming that the researcher had access to initiative *meetings* but not to time *beyond* meetings. Once told this (by the Chair), the researcher decided to emphasize the research as an important exercise and one that attendees were

happy to participate in. The researcher gave a short presentation about the research in the next PDVTG meeting, emphasizing its importance and 'playing up her credentials' (see Bryman 2001).

As a participant-as-observer, the researcher *observed* but also formed relationships with initiative attendees. The researcher's position as a researcher was not concealed and the researcher did not behave like a member of the initiative or the meeting. The researcher avoided sitting in the midst of attendees (though this sometimes proved troublesome as attendance was numerous and meeting rooms were rather cramped) and did not take part in discussions. Further, the researcher emphasized throughout that she was not a member of the initiative or the meeting.

Whatever the role chosen, a participant observer must face the issue of whether to be an active or passive participant (see Bryman 2001). Sometimes, participation is unavoidable or researchers feel compelled to 'join in'. Certainly, though assuming a limited participation role, the present researcher found herself making tea or coffee on more than one occasion in Pittplace meetings. This experience mirrored Fine's (1996, cited in Bryman 2001) experience. Notwithstanding his limited participation in restaurants in his research, Fine washed-up in these restaurants in busy periods. The decision whether to be an active or a passive participant usually centres on concern that not participating might suggest limited commitment. In one PDVTG meeting, attendees were keen to find out whether and why other Hillshire multi-agency domestic violence initiatives were gathering for a presentation by the 'Leeds Inter-Agency Project' – they asked the researcher. Because she had attended a HDVWG meeting where the presentation had been organized, the researcher knew these initiatives were, indeed, gathering for a presentation and also knew why. She was aware, though, that another PDVTG attendee had also attended this HDVWG meeting and would also, then, have known these initiatives were gathering. Indeed, this attendee had gone to the presentation. So, when PDVTG attendees asked whether and why these initiatives were gathering, the researcher had to decide whether to participate actively or to be passive and possibly appear uncommitted. Since PDVTG attendees could have found out from the other attendee that there was a gathering, the researcher decided to avoid such an appearance and answer 'whether' but not 'why'. She answered that there was, indeed, a gathering but decided that answering *why* there was a gathering would be to participate too actively. She suggested attendees ask the PDVTG representative on the HDVWG.

Observing initiative meetings, detailed field-notes were taken. Mostly, notes were taken as and when things were said and done in initiative meetings. Sometimes, this continuous and rather copious note-taking caused the researcher to feel (and probably appear) conspicuous. Being conspicuous concerned the researcher. A main problem in participant observation is that researchers might affect the social setting. Participant observers are interacting with other participants and are part of the setting that is being observed. Certainly, Becker (1958) questions whether informants' behaviour would be the same were the participant not present. The researcher hoped not to be conspicuous and affect the setting being observed and tried increasingly to use mental notes or jotted notes – "...little phrases, quotes, key words, and the like..." (Lofland and Lofland 1995: 90) – in meetings and produce full-field notes once meetings had ended. Unfortunately, this sometimes did not seem possible and detailed field-notes were taken throughout the research period.

As resource and time considerations determined access, so such considerations determined leaving the field. Rather than issues around 'theoretical saturation' (Glaser and Strauss 1967) meaning the researcher stopped observations, time issues – needing time to write up the thesis – heralded the end of the research observation period. On leaving each initiative, the researcher wrote to each Chair and made a statement in the last meeting attended explaining both that the observation had ended and that the writing-up was to begin.

Though participant observation centres in the main on 'observation', most participant observers use a triangulation method – using more than one source or method of data collection (Denzin 1978). Certainly, during his time as a participant observer of the 1981 Ansells brewery strike, Waddington 'supplemented' attending picket lines:

> "...by collecting all forms of documentation issues during the strike (for example, letters, strike bulletins, propaganda leaflets), and selected local and national media coverage...I amassed huge quantities of documentary material (for example, formal correspondence and minutes of union-management meetings spanning two decades), statistical information and off-the record insights relating to the strike..." (1999: 114).

The present researcher also used a triangulation method – gathering documents and conducting qualitative interviews. The researcher gathered vast documentation to paint a clearer picture of the multi-agency approach to domestic violence in Hillshire. From multi-agency domestic violence initiatives themselves, the researcher gathered, inter alia, letters; annual reports; 'mailings'; newsletters; resources (such as facts on domestic violence; literature lists; details about service provision); advertisements for domestic violence or women's focused events. From Hillshire service providers, the researcher

gathered, inter alia, leaflets; fliers; posters; user figures; annual reports; financial details; contact cards; information packs; conference packs; details of new services; policies on domestic violence; resources on domestic violence (good practice guides; 'myths, facts and stereotypes'; legal information); the letters Hillshire Police send to victims and their incident report form on domestic violence. From statutory partnerships, the researcher gathered crime and disorder audits and strategies, as well as information on crime prevention and community safety projects in the research areas. The researcher also collected information from service providers in other areas; from national service providers such as Women's Aid; newspapers cuttings; Home Office documents such as the 'Break the Chain' leaflet[73]. Finally, the researcher gathered agendas and minutes from the multi-agency initiatives researched.

As well as gathering documents, the researcher also conducted qualitative interviews.

Qualitative Interviewing.

Interviews might be seen as 'conversations with a purpose' and can be standardized or structured[74]; semi-standardized or semi-structured[75]; or non-standardized or unstructured[76]. In a structured interview, the researcher has enormous control over proceedings. The researcher decides the topics to be discussed and designs the questions so as to secure the 'right' material. Questions are usually specific and offer the interviewee certain possible answers that can be given – 'closed questions'. In structured interviewing, questions are worded in the same way in each interview and posed in the same order, interview-to-interview. Though increasing the reliability of the material secured, this essentially prescribes the issues the interviewee can discuss and restricts them to the topics the researcher has chosen. Topics and issues the researcher has not chosen but deemed important by the interviewee are excluded. More, the structured interview does not make provision for an examination of the complexity of the interviewee's position on the topics covered.

The unstructured interview is a 'guided conversation' (Lofland 1971). In an unstructured interview, the researcher decides on a list of topics they want the interviewee to discuss but they are free to word the questions as they choose. 'Open questions' – those that do not present the interviewee with certain possible answers that can be given – characterize the unstructured interview. Further, the researcher can pose

[73] See Chapter One.
[74] Hereinafter called the structured interview.
[75] Hereinafter called the semi-structured interview.
[76] Hereinafter called the unstructured interview.

questions in whatever order they deem appropriate; pose just one question and let the interviewee response freely; and even join in the conversation. During this conversation, the interviewee might feel more relaxed and so be more forthcoming with information than she would have been in an 'interview situation'. Unstructured interviewing, then, is a good method to use in research on sensitive topics such as domestic violence.

Though both the structured interview and unstructured interview are valuable, neither seemed appropriate in the research on multi-agency approaches to domestic violence in Hillshire. The structured interview seemed rather too prescriptive to use to question agency representatives and multi-agency domestic violence initiative attendees on multi-agency approaches and initiatives. Structured interviews are not applicable when an examination of attitudes is an essential part of the investigation and Hillshire attendees' attitudes were, indeed, deemed central to the current research. Further, the control the structured interview gives the researcher is not appropriate in research on domestic violence and might mirror the control that characterizes abusive relationships.

The unstructured interview, poses problems in analysing – it "...can be difficult to decide what a section of conversation is about, let alone agree on the key messages it contains..." (Arksey and Knight 1999: 9). Also, it is sometimes hard in the unstructured interview, given the distinctive features in the data, to avoid identifying individuals and avoid comprising anonymity.

Since neither the structured interview nor the unstructured interview seemed appropriate, the researcher used semi-structured interviews in the Hillshire research.

The Semi-Structured Interview.

The semi-structured interview is "...a mixture of the characteristics of the other two styles..." (Arksey and Knight 1999: 8; see King 1999) and boasts a mix of closed and open questions. The interviews conducted in Hillshire, though, were more inclined to the unstructured interview, containing fewer closed questions and more open questions. Semi-structured interviews cover topics the researcher has chosen and the main questions are posed in the same way each time. Nonetheless, the researcher *might* change the sequence of questions. More, the researcher is authorized, if not encouraged, to pursue issues and to probe further than the interviewee's response to the standard question. As such, the semi-structured interview gives the researcher and the interviewee considerable flexibility. This flexibility means the researcher can explore

interesting avenues emerging in the interview and possibly gather much broader data. Semi-structured interviews also enable the researcher and the researched to develop certain rapport, meaning it is much more probable that the interviewee discusses their feelings and thoughts spontaneously rather than just 'reeling off' a rehearsed position. The semi-structured interview allows the interviewee to give a much fuller picture of their feelings about or thoughts on a particular topic. Further, the interviewee can introduce topics the researcher had not thought to pose questions on and can share more in the direction the interview takes. This was important in Hillshire because it seemed probable that the researcher might not foresee everything that every interviewee chose to discuss. Finally, the interviewee is seen as 'the expert' and is accorded as much opportunity as it possible to tell her story (see Smith 1995).

Semi-structured interviews were chosen essentially because these interviews encourage interviewees to voice their real feelings. This could ensure that interviewees' thoughts, opinions and experiences on and around multi-agency approaches to domestic violence could be really examined and much more than just the 'official line' on such approaches be explored. Multi-agency approaches are rather 'the in thing'. A method was needed that encouraged multi-agency domestic violence initiative attendees to 'say what they really thought' and to say what was important to them.

One main disadvantage of semi-structured interviewing is that the control the researcher has over the situation is reduced but one might argue that this is not disadvantageous in research on domestic violence. A disadvantage of qualitative interviewing per se is that interviews are demanding on the researcher's time. Certainly, the time arranging interviews in Hillshire, travelling to the interview and conducting the interview demanded much time in the research period.

Again, though, interviewing, specifically semi-structured interviewing, seemed a good method to use in examining numerous research questions, topics and problematics. First, on attendance in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives, a main research topic has been why do some agencies and organizations attend but some do not? Also, why are some agencies poor attendees? On these 'why' questions, the semi-structured interview could enable the researcher to examine as full a picture as possible of individual attendees' feelings and thoughts on their agencies' attendance and their

individual attendance. Do they rationalize it? So, during interviews[77] interviewees were asked such questions as:

- 'When and how did this agency get involved in the initiative'?
- 'When and how did you get involved in the initiative'?
- 'How often do you attend initiative meetings'?
- 'When you don't attend is that because you have other work responsibilities or is there another reason?'
- 'Would you like to attend regularly'?

On research questions about whether initiative attendees are committed domestic violence people or multi-agency people, interviewees could be asked about their agencies' service provision and their work around domestic violence, as well as their attendance on other multi-agency initiatives.

Further, on how agencies sit around the multi-agency table, semi-structured interviews could be used to examine individual attendees' thoughts and feelings on whether there had been conflict or disagreement. Did interviewees' opinions on this differ initiative-to-initiative? Were interviewees in one area more prepared than those in another to name as 'conflict' or 'disagreement' situations that had happened in initiatives? Did interviewees' opinions on this differ in the same initiative – did some but not other talk about conflict and disagreement? Also, interviews could be used to examine attendees' thoughts and feelings on whether there had been conflict or disagreement *before* the research period.

So, during interviews interviewees were asked questions like:

- 'Has there ever been any disagreement between initiative attendees?'
- 'Do you think disagreement is/would be a good or a bad thing?'

Secondly, semi-structured interviews seemed a good method to use in examining questions on multi-agency structures – especially those on changing membership. Certainly, on changing membership, interviews could examine whether and why those representing some agencies change over time and individual attendees' opinions on how this is experienced. During interviews attendees were asked such questions as:

- 'Does those who attend initiative meetings change very much over time?'
- 'Is it generally the same people who attend?'
- 'Do you feel that changing membership is a problem?'

[77] Readers are referred back to Chapter Two where the researcher explained that the main questions, topics and problematics in the research were *not* the same as the questions that were asked of interviewees during the research interviews.

- 'Do you think agencies should be represented by the same person at each meeting?'

Further, a main research topic has centred on the 'multi-agency model'. Around this topic, further questions have centred on the possible influence the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 might have on this 'model'. Semi-structured interviews were more appropriate than structured interviews to examine this topic because crime and disorder processes were young as the research was conducted and it seemed possible (probable) that the research interviewees would introduce issues the researcher had not thought to pose questions on.

Thirdly, semi-structured interviewing seemed a good method to use in examining research questions on outcomes in multi-agency domestic violence approaches – what do initiatives aim to do; what do they do; and what does this mean? On initiatives' aims/objectives a main research topic has been what do initiatives want to do? The interview chosen needed to encourage interviewees to volunteer freely their feelings and thoughts on initiatives' aims rather than just reciting a rehearsed position[78]. Interviewees were asked what they understood initiatives' aims and objectives to be and whether these aims/objectives mirrored what they thought initiatives' aims/objectives *should be*. On initiatives' outputs, it seemed important to explore attendees' understanding of initiatives' work. Semi-structured interviews encourage an emphasis on how the interviewee frames and understands issues (see Bryman 2001). Having seen for herself the work multi-agency domestic violence initiatives did, it seemed important to examine how initiative attendees themselves had seen that work.

Finally, main research questions have focused on whether initiatives increase attendees' interaction outside initiative meetings; whether networking and communication improve as a result of multi-agency initiatives; and whether organizational service provision is affected as agencies attend initiatives. These were main questions in the research and the researcher needed to access attendees' 'true' position on them. Again, semi-structured interviews seemed the most appropriate method to use to access this true position because these interviews encourage the interviewee to volunteer spontaneously information 'at the front of their mind' (see Arksey and Knight 1999). First, interviewees were asked about their agencies' service provision – 'in terms of domestic violence, what do you see as being the main services that your agency is providing?' Then, interviewees were asked:

[78] The fact that some did 'reel off' a rehearsed position raised interesting points about these initiatives' aims, though.

- 'Can your agency provide these services on its own?'
- 'Who, if anyone, does it need assistance from'?
- 'Are those 'who' represented on the initiative?'

Further, interviewees were asked about *their* service provision:

- 'What does your job involve?'
- 'How often do you work with initiative members?'
- 'How often is this working regarding a particular case?'
- 'Is this working only with an initiative member or is it with another representative of the agency?'
- 'Could you have got to that person with being a member of the initiative?'
- 'Are the people with whom you work also members of the initiative?'

The semi-structured interview could allow for a full exploration of these questions and, more, could ensure that, rather than being problematic, it would be positive if the interviewee responded in a manner that the researcher had not foreseen.

Fourthly, semi-structured interviews seemed a good method to use in examining research questions about power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches. Notwithstanding, these research questions about power were perhaps the hardest to translate into *interview* questions. Because domestic violence centres on power, the word 'power' seemed rather too sensitive to use in interviews. As Fielding (1990) points out, what matters in the research situation is what the interviewee finds sensitive. Because it seemed possible that some interviewees in Hillshire might find the word sensitive, the research questions 'what is power?' could not be posed as an *interview* question. Rather, research interviews included questions such as:

- 'Do you think there are any disadvantages of multi-agency working?'
- 'What do you think of the multi-agency approach, do you think it has any bad features?'
- 'Do you think that the multi-agency approach has any negative features?'

Before thinking about how semi-structured interviews were used in Hillshire to examine the research questions, the importance of using both observations and interviews might be mentioned.

Arksey and Knight suggest that triangulation "...serves two main purposes: *confirmation* (Denzin, 1970) and *completeness* (Jick, 1983)..." (1999: 21. Italics Original). The importance of using both observations and interviews in Hillshire has also centred on confirmation and completeness. Certainly, things that the researcher seemed to be seeing through research observations could be confirmed (or denied) through research interviews. Sometimes, confirmation could be volunteered during

interviews – the semi-structured interview allows for this. Other times, confirmation was directly sought in research interviews – again, the semi-structured interview allows for certain questions to be posed that seek confirmation. As is seen in Chapter Five, a main research finding seen through research observation turned out to be that some agencies and organizations were poor attendees on the initiatives researched. This finding was largely confirmed in research interviews as interviewees volunteered the same agencies and organizations as poor attendees. Another main research finding seen through observations turned out to be that there was little conflict in these initiatives in the research period. Again, this finding was confirmed as, when asked whether there was much disagreement, research interviewees also said that there was little conflict in the initiatives.

The importance of using both observations and interviews in Hillshire also centred on completeness. First, the things that the researcher seemed to be seeing through research observations could be *explained* through research interviews. So, the main finding, mentioned earlier, that some agencies and organizations were poor attendees on the initiatives researched could be explained through questioning interviewees about why they did and did not attend initiative meetings. Likewise, things that were seen in research interviews could be explained through observations. Certain issues that were seen in interviews made much more sense as other issues were seen in observations. A main research finding in Pittplace turned out to be that confusion abounded on the distinctions between different domestic violence organizations. This confusion was seen in many research interviews conducted in Pittplace but it made much more sense and seemed to be explained by things seen through research observations, not least that when attendees raised this confusion in meetings it was dismissed as unimportant.

Whyte seems to summarise completeness here:

> "...in stressing the importance of linking interviewing with observation, I have noted that observation alone does not reveal to us what people are trying to accomplish or why they act as they do. Furthermore, interviewing may not lead us to the underlying dynamics in some cases unless we are armed with advance knowledge of the rewards people are seeking or of the penalties they are trying to avoid..." (1984: 94).

But the things that the researcher seemed to be seeing through one method could be more than just explained using the other method. Certainly, there were things that could not be seen through using just observations or just interviews. As mentioned, main research questions were on attending agencies' and organizations' service provision, especially on such provision vis-à-vis the initiatives researched. The researcher thought it improbable that these questions could be furthered using observations alone. As also

mentioned, other main research questions were about power but these research questions were perhaps the hardest to translate into *interview* questions. Given these difficulties, it again seemed improbable that these questions could be furthered using interviews alone.

Perhaps another issue to be mentioned is that using both observations and interviews accorded the researcher the opportunity to further examine interesting leads. Certainly, the research questions that derived from the points in the literature included questions about multi-agency structures – 'is there a multi-agency domestic violence model?'. These questions also included the topic 'what influence might the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 have on the multi-agency domestic violence model?'. So, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 had always been an issue under examination. But the importance of examining whether the influence that the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 might have was different in the different research areas only became apparent through observations in the first initiative research, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group. Whether or not each area and each initiative would welcome crime and disorder provisions as the Topic Group appeared through observations to be doing was a topic that could be and examined was through research interviews.

So, the importance of using both observations and interviews in Hillshire centred on completeness. As the research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite are set out in Chapter Five, the connections between observation and interview data are clearly seen.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with PDVTG, PMADVF and SDVF attendees, as well as with members of Pittplace and Steelsite statutory partnerships – the Pittplace Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) and the Safer Steelsite Steering Group (SSSG) – and with HDVWG attendees. Both face-to-face and telephone interviews were used.

How Many Interviews?

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 14 PDVTG attendees and with eleven SDVF attendees. Face-to-face interviews were also conducted with eight PCSP members and six SSSG members and with four HDVWG attendees. Telephone interviews were conducted with twelve SDVF attendees and six PMADVF attendees. A total of 60 interviews were conducted.

TABLE 4A: *a table showing numbers of face-to-face and telephone interviews conducted in the Hillshire research.*

	Face-To-Face Interview	Telephone Interview	Total Interviews
PDVTG	14	0	14
PMADVF	0	6	6
SDVF	10	12	22
PCSP	8	0	8
SSSG	6	0	6
HDVWG	4	0	4
			60

Sampling Points.

Three representatives attended PDVTG meetings just once and were not chosen to be interviewed. Fifteen representatives attended PDVTG meetings more than once in the research period – 14 were chosen to be interviewed. The one not chosen to be interviewed began attending some time into the research period. She had, though, been attending the PMADVF and plans were already underway to interview her as a PMADVF attendee.

SDVF attendees chosen to be interviewed were SDVF Management Committee representatives. Eleven of thirteen such representatives were chosen. Two were not chosen because the researcher could not gain access to their addresses. Clearly, other attendees could have been chosen. Yet, there were numerous SDVF attendees in the research period and the researcher needed to choose some but not others without causing offence to those not chosen and damaging their confidence in the researcher or the research process. Choosing attendees because they were Management Committee representatives seemed the best way to this. Choosing which SDVF attendees with whom to conduct a telephone interview, though, was most problematic. The researcher began by examining who had attended SDVF Full Forum meetings since 1997. She then examined who had attended the SDVF's Annual General Meeting in the research period and examined who received 'Forum mailings'. Eventually, 19 attendees were chosen. Choosing which PMADVF attendees with whom to conduct telephone interviews was much easier – all but five representatives on a PMADVF 'contact list' were chosen. Two were not chosen because they were not *Pittplace* agency representatives and three were not chosen because they had already been interviewed as PDVTG attendees.

Since main research questions have centred on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, it seemed appropriate to undertake semi-structured interviews with members of statutory partnerships in Hillshire. Members of Pittplace and Steelsite statutory partnerships

were chosen because the research has focused on these areas. Again, the researcher chose certain members of statutory partnerships to be interviewed – those members of the groups in each partnership that housed the 'responsible authorities'. In the Pittplace partnership this group is the Partnership Policy Board (PPB) and in the Steelsite partnership it is the SSSG.

Seventeen PCSP PPB members are listed in Pittplace's crime and disorder strategy summary. The researcher chose and contacted eleven members to be interviewed. Two members were not chosen because others in their agencies had been chosen. So, Pittplace Metropolitan Borough Council's (PMBC) Deputy Chief Executive was not chosen because the Chief Executive had been. Likewise, two voluntary sector members were not chosen because two other voluntary sector members had been. Finally, the PPB Vice-Chair and Second Vice-Chair were not chosen because the Chair had been. SSSG members are listed as agencies rather than individuals in Steelsite's crime and disorder strategy. In deciding which individuals to interview, the researcher convened a meeting with the SSSG 'co-ordinator'. The 'co-ordinator furnished the researcher with a list of 14 individuals who represented the member agencies. The researcher chose and contacted ten to be interviewed. The four not chosen included two interviewed as members of the PCSP PPB. Since both were senior organizational representatives, it seemed improbable that either would agree to be interviewed again. The remaining two not contacted were the Youth Offending Team representative and the Drugs Action Team representative. Because most questions the researcher hoped to pose in these interviews centred on domestic violence, it seemed that these representative might be unwilling or unsuited to an interview.

Since examining whether the influence that the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 might be different in the different research areas became an important issue that could be examined through research interviews, it also seemed appropriate to undertake semi-structured interviews with Belleton and Millerton representatives and ask them about the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and domestic violence in their respective areas. Because Belleton and Millerton multi-agency domestic violence initiatives are represented on the HDVWG and the researcher had attended some meetings of the HDVWG, it was decided to interview Belleton and Millerton attendees on the HDVWG. Just four Belleton and Millerton attendees on the HDVWG were interviewed, both because of the researcher's resource and time pressures and because

no other Belleton and Millerton attendee attended the HDVWG more than once in the research period.

No PDVTG attendee selected to be interviewed could not be interviewed. Of the eleven SDVF Management Committee representatives chosen to be face-to-face interviewed two were not interviewed, Hillshire Police and Steelsite Education Social Work Service representatives, because interviews could not be organized. Fortunately, though, both the Hillshire Police and Steelsite Education Social Work Service nominated two other representatives to the Management Committee around the time the interviews were being organized – both were then contacted and agreed to be interviewed. One other SDVF Management Committee representatives chosen to be interviewed was not interviewed because she was on leave. One non-Management Committee representative was face-to-face interviewed. The researcher had planned to conduct a telephone interview with the representative but she disliked using the telephone and asked to be interviewed face-to-face. Seven of 19 SDVF chosen to be telephone interviewed were not interviewed – again, because an interview just could not be organized. The researcher could not even *contact* some attendees chosen.

Of the eight PMADVF attendees chosen to be telephone interviewed, two were not interviewed – one because she was on leave and the second because she denied all knowledge of the PMADVF!

Of the eleven PCSP PPB members chosen to be interviewed, four did not agree to be interviewed. One, PMBC's Chief Executive, passed the researcher onto PMBC's Deputy Chief Executive (himself an 'advisor to the PCSP PPB) and he was interviewed instead. Of the ten SSSG members chosen to be interviewed, four were not interviewed (again, because they did not agree).

Table 4B sets out information on those that were interviewed.

TABLE 4B: *A Table Showing Interviewees' Agencies, Organizations And Departments Of Agencies, Gender And Their Hierarchical Position In Their Agency Or Organization.*

Interviewee	**Agency, Organization and Department of Agency**	**Gender**	**Hierarchical Position.**
Interviewee One	PMBC Education Department	F	Manager
Interviewee Two	Hillshire Police	F	Practitioner
Interviewee Three	Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)	F	Practitioner
Interviewee Four	Pittplace Community Safety Partnership	F	Manager

Interviewee Five	Pittplace Community & Priority Service NHS Trust (Psychological Health Care Section)	F	Manager
Interviewee Six	PMBC Social Services Department	F	Manager
Interviewee Seven	Hillshire Probation Service	M	Manager
Interviewee Eight	Pittplace Women & Children's Refuge	F	Practitioner
Interviewee Nine	PMBC Housing Department	F	Manager
Interviewee Ten	Pittplace Women & Children's Refuge	F	Manager
Interviewee Eleven	Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline	F	Manager
Interviewee Twelve	Pittplace Health Authority	M	Manager
Interviewee 13	Hillshire Police	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 14	Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 15	Hillshire Probation Service	F	Manager
Interviewee 16	Pittplace NCH Action for Children	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 17	Pittplace District Hospital NHS Trust	F	Manager
Interviewee 18	Hillshire Police	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 19	Pittplace Victim Support	M	Practitioner
Interviewee 20	Pittplace Community and Priority Services NHS Trust	M	Practitioner
Interviewee 21	Action Against Men's Violence Steelsite	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 22	CPS	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 23	Alpha Domestic Violence Project	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 24	Steelsite Rape & Sexual Abuse Counselling Service	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 25	Alpha Domestic Violence Project	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 26	Gamma Domestic Violence Project	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 27	Hillshire Police	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 28	Steelsite Women's Aid	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 29	SCC Education Department	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 30	Solicitors Firm A	M	Practitioner
Interviewee 31	Hillshire Police	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 32	SCC Social Services Department	F	Manager
Interviewee 33	Women Against Violence Network	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 34	Steelsite Victim Support	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 35	Beta Domestic Violence Project	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 36	Beta Domestic Violence Project	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 37	Steelsite Family Services Unit	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 38	SCC Housing Department	F	Manager
Interviewee 39	Alpha Domestic Violence Project	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 40	Hillshire Probation Service	F	Manager
Interviewee 41	Steelsite Health Authority	F	Manager
Interviewee 42	Beta Domestic Violence Project	F	Practitioner

Interviewee 43	Member of Parliament	M	N/A
Interviewee 44	PMBC	M	Senior Manager
Interviewee 45	Hillshire Police	M	Agency Head
Interviewee 46	Hillshire Probation Service	F	Senior Manager
Interviewee 47	Voluntary Action Pittplace	M	Volunteer
Interviewee 48	Hillshire Police	M	Senior Manager
Interviewee 49	Hillshire Police Authority.	M	Senior Manager
Interviewee 50	Hillshire Police	F	Senior Manager
Interviewee 51	SCC	M	Agency Head
Interviewee 52	Hillshire Police	M	Senior Manager
Interviewee 53	Hillshire Probation Service	M	Agency Head
Interviewee 54	Steelsite Magistrates' Court.	M	Agency Head
Interviewee 55	Steelsite Health Authority	M	Senior Manager
Interviewee 56	SCC Social Services Department	F	Senior Manager
Interviewee 57	Hillshire Police	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 58	Hillshire Police	F	Practitioner
Interviewee 59	Belleton Women's Aid	F	Manager
Interviewee 60	Millerton Domestic Violence Forum.	F	Practitioner

The Face-To-Face Versus The Telephone Interview.

Telephone interviews rather than face-to-face interviews were conducted with PMADVF attendees because most such attendees were 'grass-roots' practitioners and/or representatives of voluntary sector organizations and, likewise, with some SDVF attendees because those attendees not face-to-face interviewed (non-Management Committee representatives) tended to be domestic violence organization representatives. The researcher realized that these grass-roots practitioners and domestic violence organization representatives might find a telephone interview intruded less into their time.

Because telephone interviews were conducted as the research observation period neared an end, the researcher had attended numerous initiative meetings as an observer and had, by then, an ' in' with initiative attendees. As Fielding and Thomas (2001) point out, telephone interviews are a good method to use in such circumstances.

The researcher used face-to-face semi-structured interviews rather than telephone interviews with members of statutory partnerships and HDVWG attendees because most questions in these interviews centred on the statutory partnership *structures* and domestic violence multi-agency initiatives in statutory partnership structures. The

interview chosen needed to enable both the researcher and interviewee to consult visual aids, such as documents setting out these structures.

Conducting The Interviews.

Having chosen those to be interviewed, either through face-to-face or telephone interviews, the researcher then wrote to each one asking whether they would be prepared to be interviewed. A copy of the researcher's research proposal was appended to the letters sent. The researcher then telephoned each attendee to arrange an interview.

Face-to-face interviews were always held wherever was convenient for the interviewee – one interview was held in an interviewee's home because she was wheel-chair bound – and were always held *whenever* it was convenient for the interviewee. On more than one occasion, the researcher arrived to conduct an interview to be told that 'something had come up' and the interview was postponed.

The main difference in the face-to-face interviews with members of statutory partnership was that the researcher dressed differently. Throughout the research period, as a participant observer and as a face-to-face interviewer of Hillshire initiative attendees, the researcher dressed in smart clothes but remained casual. As an interviewer of members of statutory partnerships, though, the researcher dressed in much smarter clothes – usually a suit. As Arksey and Knight (1999) point out, clothes that are acceptable to the respective people the researcher is interviewing might encourage rapport and mean the researcher gains acceptance – this might mean these interviewees are more forthcoming.

Face-to-face interviews usually lasted around one hour, sometimes lasting a little longer. Just one interview took considerably less time than this. Notwithstanding, points raised in this interview were most instructive and epitomized the spontaneously volunteered information 'at the front of interviewees' minds' that characterizes the semi-structured interview. Indeed, points raised in this interview are discussed fully in Chapter Six. As Bryman says "...it should not be assumed that shorter interviews are necessarily inferior to longer ones..." (2001: 322).

Telephone interviews were always conducted when it was convenient for the telephone-interviewee and the researcher always telephoned the interviewee. The telephone interviews were shorter and telephone-interviewees tended to be more focused than the face-to-face interviewees. Seemingly, this is common (see Fielding and Thomas 2001).

Interestingly, the telephone interviews conducted encountered no difficulties with rapport in and each telephone-interviewee was forthcoming. Fielding and Thomas say that:

> "...the [telephone] interviewer needs very effective communication skills to keep the interaction 'natural' while keeping an eye on the interview guide and helping the respondent stay on topic..." (2001: 130).

Yet, the Pittplace/Steelsite telephone interviews were not as troublesome as Fielding and Thomas (2001) fear and enabled rich data to be gathered. The telephone-interviewee being interrupted was the main problem with these interviews – them dropping the telephone was another!

Tape-Recording and Transcription.

All face-to-face and telephone interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. No pressure was placed on face-to-face interviewees to be recorded. Interviewees were asked whether they would be prepared to be recorded and were told that the recording could be stopped if and when they wanted. They were assured their responses would be confidential.

Because telephone-interviewees cannot see recorders, the researcher made every effort to ensure telephone-interviewees had agreed to, and were aware that, their responses were being recorded. She asked telephone-interviewees when approaching them to be interviewed whether they would agree to a recorder being used; she sent a letter reminding them that she planned to record the interview; and asked again just before the telephone interview began whether they would agree to a recorder being used.

The main advantage in recording semi-structured interviews is that the researcher can focus on the interview without needing to scribble furiously the interviewee's responses. Researchers are thus free to follow up interesting points and probe further. Also, the researcher might need to examine both *what* is being said and *how* it is being said – a recorded interview accords much more opportunity to examine both issues. Finally, using a tape-recorder suggests that interviewees' responses are being taken seriously (see Arksey and Knight 1999; Fielding and Thomas 2001). Yet, recording might alarm interviewees, encouraging nervousness and dissuading frankness. Further, a tape-recorder might be a distraction to both interviewee and researcher. Certainly, the 'was the tape still going around' question loomed large in the present researcher's mind in interesting interviews. Unfortunately, the answer to this question was sometimes 'no'. Tape-recorder malfunction is a main problem in recording interviews and, though

the researcher took notes during and after interviews, caused some interviews to be 'lost'. Finally, some interviewees might *acquiesce* 'because they feel they ought to' rather than *agree* to be recorded.

Interestingly, no face-to-face or telephone interviewee refused to be recorded, though a couple did seem keen to return to points raised or expand on issues once the recorder had been turned off.

Face-to-face and telephone interviews were transcribed in full. The main problem in transcribing interviews is that such transcription is a long and laborious process. Arksey and Knight's (1999) approximation that a one-hour tape might mean a ten-hour transcription process seems rather optimistic – some Hillshire interviews took much longer to transcribe. Nonetheless, the transcribing process encouraged increasing familiarization with, and has enabled a much thorough examination and, more, a *repeated* examination of, the Hillshire interviews.

Finally, one focus group interview was conducted in Pittplace.

Focus Group Interviews.

Focus group interviews are guided or unguided discussions. The focus group interview allows researchers to observe members spontaneously sharing experiences and thoughts. 'Good' focus groups are 'dynamic', as group interaction encourages discussions and encourages members to 'thought-shower' collectively, meaning that numerous ideas, issues and questions can be generated. Certainly, meanings emerging during focus groups are socially constructed rather than individually created.

A main research topic has been is and how is organizational service provision affected as agencies and organizations attend multi-agency domestic violence initiatives? The researcher had hoped to examine this topic vis-à-vis volunteers – is *their* service provision affected as their co-ordinators or Chairs attend initiatives? Since this topic could not be explored through participant observation, it had been hoped to conduct focus groups with Pittplace/Steelsite domestic violence organization volunteers. Unfortunately, though, only limited access could be gained to these volunteers. Just one focus group interview could be arranged – with Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline volunteers – but only two volunteers attended. Under no circumstances could the focus group interview held be seen as 'dynamic'. Both because just one interview was conducted and the size of the group was much smaller than usual (see

Bryman 2001), the focus group interview did not prove to be a good method in the empirical examination of the research questions in Hillshire.

For information, the volunteers interviewed here are referred to as 'Volunteer 1' and 'Volunteer 2' in the remaining Chapters. Volunteer 1 was a man; Volunteer 2 was a woman.

2. Ethical Issues.

Certain ethics have governed the research in Hillshire.

First, confidentiality. Confidentiality is based on the notion that, though people grant access to information about themselves, they do not necessarily relinquish control over the information obtained. A researcher should, therefore, not divulge what has been learned to others without the individual's permission. The present researcher has tried to ensure confidentiality throughout the research process in Hillshire. Certainly, the researcher did not (even when asked) disclose anything learned through research interviews or observations to other interviewees or attendees and emphasized that feedback would be given, in so far as was possible, once the research had been completed[79]. Further, in writing-up the thesis, the researcher has anonymised the research areas using pseudonyms and has tended to included quotes from 'research interviewees', rather than specifying at the time the quote was set out which agency representative has said what. Nonetheless, especially in organizational research, it is moot that full confidentiality and anonymity can be assured.

Secondly, veracity – telling the truth. Deception occurs when researchers present their research as something other than what it is. Received opinion is that researchers must provide proper information about the nature of a study and that participants should not be misled about the purpose of a study. The researcher told the truth to all Hillshire participants.

Thirdly, privacy, based on the idea that people have the right to limit access to themselves, physically, emotionally or cognitively. Research participants grant access to themselves when they agree to take part in a study. However, they do not grant unlimited access and so an interviewee has the right to decline to discuss some matters. Though encouraging research interviewees to be forthcoming, the researcher recognized this right to decline and did not push and probe interviewees who had clearly said as

[79] No feedback has been given thus far to initiatives in Hillshire. Once the thesis is submitted, though, it is expected that arrangements to give such feedback can get underway.

much as they wanted to say on an issue. So, the researcher tried to be both sensitive and sensible in probing interviewees on disclosures that they did not see their attendance on initiatives as important or that they sometimes experienced the police as troublesome et cetera.

Fourthly, autonomy. Essentially, researchers must realize that a person has the right to agree or not agree to take part in research. It is in this right to autonomy that efforts to secure informed consent are grounded. Informed consent is an important ethical consideration. The researcher should endeavour to secure a mutual or shared understanding with those being researched of what will be involved in the research. The question of whether informed consent has been obtained involves a number of considerations, such as whether the researcher has provided potential research participants with information that might affect their decision to participate. As mentioned, when writing to attendees to ask them whether they would be prepared to be interviewed, the researcher appended a copy of her research proposal. Hopefully, then, the researcher did provide enough information to ensure *interviewees'* 'informed consent' to participate in the research. But, could the same be said about those attending initiative meetings – had they given 'informed consent'? Though the researcher explained at the beginning of each and every meeting observed that she was a doctoral researcher; examining multi-agency approaches to domestic violence; and that she was observing the meeting, were attendees listening? Certainly, the researcher missed other attendees' introductions – did attendees hear the explanation in full? What about those attendees arriving late and after the explanation? What about those attendees who heard the explanation; were unhappy about being observed; but wanted to attend the meeting; and stayed to be observed – had these attendees given 'informed consent'? Finally, does informed consent, once given, endure? Clearly, socialization processes might have meant that Hillshire initiative attendees had ceased to be aware of, or failed to continue to give consideration to, the researcher's *research* status – has their informed consent lapsed?

Essentially, as Homan says, implementing the principle of informed consent "...is easier said than done..." (1991: 73). The present researcher had tried to ensure Hillshire initiatives attendees' autonomy because *lack of* autonomy is clearly an important principle in domestic violence. Certainly, the battered women's movement has always sought to promote women's autonomy (see Hague and Malos 1998). Likewise, the researcher tried to minimize power differentials in research interviews,

not just because power differentials – interviewer versus interviewee – can discourage an interviewee and cause them to discuss issues less freely (Denzin 1970) but because power differentials characterize domestic violence relationships. So, inter alia, most interviews were conducted on the interviewee's 'ground' rather than in University buildings. So, though a difficult ethical principle in the Hillshire research, autonomy had been one the researcher had tried to ensure.

Finally, "...harm to subjects..." (Bulmer 2001: 51). This was an easier ethical principle in Hillshire since the researcher did not to cause harm or expose participants to unnecessary risks.

We have seen, then, the main methods the researcher used in the research and how these methods were used to examine the research questions empirically. We have also seen the ethical principles that the researcher has tried to ensure. Perhaps one of main contributions of this Chapter to the thesis has been to highlight the importance of using both observations and interviews to examine the research questions. We have seen that the things that the researcher seemed to be seeing through research observations could be confirmed (or denied) through research interviews and that the things appearing through both observations and interviews could be explained using the other method. We have also seen that the importance of using both sources centred on an acceptance that some research questions could not be examined using just observations or just interviews and, also, on a keenness to further examine interesting leads seen through one method, using the other. In highlighting the importance of using both observations and interviews, the Chapter contributes to the development of the thesis because it introduces the connections between observation and interview data – connections which are clearly seen in the next Chapter Five.

Let us now move to Chapter Five and examine the research results.

Chapter Five – The Results.

1. Introduction.

Chapter Five sets out the main research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite. The main findings are presented under five headings – The Initiatives; Attendance In The Initiatives Researched; Discussions In The Initiatives Researched; The Initiatives' Main Outputs; and Attendees' Service Provision.

First, then, the initiatives researched are described. Mostly, this description focuses on each initiative's aims and objectives, but structural differences between each initiative are also included.

Secondly, attendance in the initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite is examined. Eighteen main research findings about attendance in these initiatives are set out. These findings were seen through both research observations in each initiative and research interviews conducted in attending agencies and organizations. Mostly, the points raised by research observations were also raised by research interviews. So, the agencies and organizations that were observed to be poor attendees in initiatives were the same agencies and organizations that were said by research interviewees to be poor attendees. Sometimes, though, points seen through research observations were not seen by research interviewees. For example, research observations suggested that changing attendance characterised the Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum but most interviewees did not see changing attendance in that Forum. Clearly, then, both observations and interview data are important here.

Thirdly, discussions in each initiative are covered, sometimes with reference to initiative agendas and minutes. Discussions in such meetings are covered quite thoroughly here. This is because multi-agency domestic violence initiatives' main focus appears to be their meetings – some do nothing more than sit around the table together. Past research has not painted a complete picture of the meeting setting. The Pittplace and Steelsite research is an opportunity to paint such a picture and, as such, to illustrate clearly just what goes on in multi-agency meetings.

Some findings about discussions in Pittplace and Steelsite set out here are not picked up in Chapter Six. This is because Chapter Six focuses on the main issues raised in Pittplace and Steelsite that lead to the researcher's main conclusion, advanced in Chapter Seven. This is not to suggest that the findings about discussions, and, indeed, other findings, in Pittplace and Steelsite set out here but not picked up in Chapter Six

are unimportant. Rather, numerous such findings centre on important differences from and likenesses to findings in other research. Because discussions in Pittplace and Steelsite meetings are covered quite thoroughly, these differences and likenesses can be introduced here and explored more fully in other publications.

The initiatives' main outputs are examined, fourthly. Outputs are "...the products of a programme, narrowly defined in terms of what an organization has done..." (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk). Outputs compare to aims, which are "...the results one wants to achieve through a programme, stated in general terms..." and objectives, which are "...aims restated in more specific and concrete terms..." (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk). Outputs also compare to outcomes, which are "...the broader consequences of a programme's outputs..." (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk). Findings about the initiatives' main outputs were, again, seen through both research observations and research interviews.

Finally, attendees' service provision is examined. Research findings on agencies' service provision were mostly seen through research interviews. Pittplace and Steelsite interviewees were questioned about their agencies' provision and their individual working – their responses are examined here.

2. The Initiatives.

Aims and Objectives.

The Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group (PDVTG).

When convened[80], the PDVTG soon established aims and objectives:

> "...The group's purpose is to develop a borough-wide strategy for addressing domestic violence with the following aims:-
>
> 1. To promote the health, safety and welfare of past, current and future potential victims of domestic violence.
>
> 2. To expose the scale and seriousness of domestic violence within Pittplace.
>
> 3. To disseminate greater knowledge and awareness of the causes and consequences of domestic violence.
>
> 4. To achieve a more effective multi-agency response to the provision of services for victims.
>
> 5. To ensure that work that is undertaken with perpetrators places the safety of women and children first and is evaluated for it's (sic) impact on harm reduction..." (Pittplace Crime Prevention Partnership. Undated).

Its eight objectives that were "...set to achieve progress in relation to the aims of the group..." (Pittplace Crime Prevention Partnership. Undated) were:

[80] See Chapter Three for background on the PDVTG.

1. To conduct an audit of current systems for data collection on incidents of domestic violence in key local agencies, and to develop an action plan for addressing any identified gaps and for information sharing.

2. To undertake an audit of training skills in the area of domestic violence amongst members of the Topic Group and other local agencies, and to develop proposals for multi-agency and community training.

3. To obtain funding in order to contribute to the county-wide public awareness campaign proposed by the Hillshire Forum[81].

4. To identify methods for survivors of domestic violence to contribute to the work of the Topic Group.

5. To develop and implement a strategy for promoting the expeditious handling of crimes of domestic violence within the Criminal Justice System.

6. To establish links with local Health Forums in order to identify the scope for collaborative work on the impact of domestic violence on the health and well-being of the community.

7. To develop and implement an accommodation strategy which meets the needs and expectations of women and children suffering from domestic violence.

8. To develop a funding strategy that will seek to establish a paid co-ordinator for the Group in addition to identifying potential funding sources for any gaps in service provision.

The PDVTG is now the 'co-ordinating group' of the Pittplace Crime and Disorder Strategy's Action Plan on domestic violence. Domestic violence is one of twelve issues identified in Pittplace's Crime and Disorder Audit and covered in Pittplace's Crime and Disorder Strategy – each has an 'action plan', including an 'overall objective' and 'activities'. The domestic violence action plan has an overall objective:

> "...to reduce the incidence of domestic violence, its fear and its effects on children..." (Pittplace Community Safety Partnership 1999).

The action plan has four 'key targets':

1. to encourage an increase in the reporting of domestic violence incidents to the Police;
2. to increase the opportunities for perpetrators to access behaviour change work;
3. to reduce the extent of domestic violence, especially repeat victimisation; and
4. to increase the support services available to women, and for children and young people affected by violence.

The action plan comprises 26 'activities', within which the eight original objectives of the PDVTG have been subsumed[82]. Finally, on 'what is going to be done to address' domestic violence, the strategy document promises to:

- continue to undertake co-ordinated publicity and education programmes to raise public awareness of domestic violence issues;
- apply the law more vigorously to offer an effective deterrent to perpetrators of domestic violence;
- increase the availability of alarm and safety systems for women who are vulnerable;
- develop safe accommodation to ensure the physical safety of women and children;
- work with perpetrators of domestic violence to address underlying issues relating to their behaviour; and
- support those experiencing domestic violence and develop an advocacy service for their needs.

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[81] See Chapter Three.

[82] The activities are listed in Appendix G.

The Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum (PMADVF).

The PMADVF has no explicit aims or objectives, though has been described as a "...practice orientated group providing networking, information-sharing and support, for agency workers dealing with the effects of domestic violence on their service delivery (Pittplace Documentation. Undated).

The Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum (SDVF).

In 1994, the SDVF established 'primary aims':

1. to work towards a consistent and co-ordinated response to domestic violence in the city;
2. to ensure that the women and children who experience domestic violence are our first priority;
3. to promote information sharing and training as our key tasks (SDVF 1997).

In 1995, it listed as charitable 'objects':

1. To promote for the public benefit and with a view to public protection and the preservation of order, the provision of services directed towards the prevention of domestic violence and the relief and support of persons (and in particular women and children) who have suffered or are in danger of suffering violence from perpetrators known to them.
2. To advance the education of voluntary and statutory agencies and the public in all aspects of domestic violence, its causes, remedies and prevention (SDVF 1995).

As the research period ceased, the SDVF published a 'multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse', with a 'primary aim':

"...a consistent, co-ordinated response to domestic abuse throughout the city..." (SDVF 2000).

This strategy contains 12 'objectives':

1. to ensure that all statutory and voluntary agencies prioritize the issue of domestic abuse, and reflect this in their policies and procedures, as service providers and employers;
2. to achieve a consistent response within individual agencies to domestic abuse;
3. to ensure a co-ordinated and integrated *multi-agency* response across the city;
4. to equip appropriate workers with the necessary awareness and skills to deal effectively with domestic abuse;
5. to provide a comprehensive range of services for women affected by domestic abuse;
6. to provide a comprehensive range of services for children and young people affected by domestic abuse;
7. to ensure that those services are accessible to, and meet the needs of, women and children from all communities and backgrounds;
8. to ensure that all children and young people are exposed to primary prevention work which promotes respect and non-violent conflict resolution;
9. to develop effective responses that challenge male perpetrators of domestic abuse;
10. to inform and engage users of services about the ongoing development of those services;
11. to secure the funding necessary to develop and maintain such comprehensive service provision; and
12. to raise public awareness of the realities and effects of domestic abuse through publicity and campaigns (SDVF 2000).

Finally, the Steelsite Crime and Disorder Strategy sets out four primary objectives. One such objective is the 'impacted crime on estates and neighbourhoods' objective. This objective has an aim – "...to reduce the level of repeat victimisation in a limited number

of neighbourhoods with high levels of impacted crime, though developing effective multi-agency action in partnership with people working in the community and local residents..." (Safer Steelsite Steering Group 1999). The document lists twelve objectives under that aim, one being "...improving reporting and recording procedures and adopting a co-ordinated response by those statutory and voluntary agencies supporting victims of domestic violence, racial and homophobic harassment..." (Safer Steelsite Steering Group 1999).

Clearly, then, there is much variation in the initiatives' aims and objectives. The PDVTG has had numerous aims and objectives, especially post 1998, but the PMADVF has had no aims or objectives and the SDVF has had no specified objectives. Further, the PDVTG's objectives have been highly specific – inter alia, 'to undertake an audit of training skills in the area of domestic violence amongst members of the topic group and other local agencies, and to develop proposals for multi-agency and community training' (Objective Two). This objective was so specific that in July 2000 the PDVTG was still discussing just what it meant! The SDVF's objectives appear less specific and much broader – inter alia, 'to ensure that women and children who experience domestic violence are our first priority'. Finally, domestic violence is one of twelve main 'aims' in Pittplace's Crime and Disorder Strategy and Pittplace's action plan has four key targets and 26 activities, including the PDVTG's eight original objectives. In Steelsite, though, domestic violence (with racial and homophobic harassment) can be found with eleven other points under one of these primary objectives. The Steelsite strategy does not include the SDVF's aims. Clearly, then, each area's crime and disorder aims and objectives are very different.

Notwithstanding this variation, it appears that the initiatives researched 'wanted to achieve' two main 'results' – better service provision and (increasingly) prevention of domestic violence. We reflect further on these main aims in Chapter Six.

Structural Differences

There were numerous differences between the PDVTG, the PMADVF and the SDVF. Some related to paid workers. The SDVF had a part-time co-ordinator as the research period commenced and a part-time co-ordinator, full-time voluntary sector development worker and a part-time administrative worker as it ceased. The PDVTG appointed a part-time co-ordinator as the research period ceased. The PMADVF has not had and did not in the research period have paid workers.

Other differences were about Chairs. The PDVTG Chair was held throughout its early phases by a Hillshire Probation Service representative. In October 1998 a senior representative from PMBC Housing Services took over this position. The PMADVF has always been chaired by the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline Chair. The SDVF was originally chaired by SCC Community Safety Unit. It is now chaired by a senior representative from SCC Housing Services.

Other differences were about 'steering' and 'sub' groups. The SDVF has a management committee, which meets bi-monthly. The Management Committee comprises elected named statutory representatives and unnamed voluntary representatives and is "...responsible for strategic planning, development of work areas, generally overseeing the business of the SDVF, and employment of the paid worker[s] through an employment sub-group..." (SDVF 1999)[83]. Neither the PDVTG nor the PMADVF have such a 'steering group'. Also, the SDVF has numerous sub-groups. As well as the employment sub-group, the SDVF has a funding sub-group that is convened whenever funding bids are needed. The SDVF also has a training sub-group; a children and young people's sub-group, founded in 1998; and in 1999 a Steelsite multi-agency group developing work with domestic violence perpetrators became a sub-group of the SDVF. Also, moves have been made toward the development of a criminal justice sub-group. Neither the PDVTG nor the PMADVF have sub-groups, though the PDVTG has 'objective groups' – groups of attendees that meet between main meetings to progress the Group's objectives.

Other differences were about meetings. As seen in Chapter Three, the PDVTG has been meeting since 1997; the PMADVF since 1994; and the SDVF since 1992. SDVF Full Forum meetings were held in a Hillshire Probation Service building as the research period commenced and thereafter in numerous locations, including Youth Association of Hillshire premises (penultimate meeting in research period) and Voluntary Action Steelsite's premises (last meeting). SDVF Full Forum meetings were not, though, held in "...big imposing rooms in the Town Hall..." because "...the voluntary sector don't like that..." (SDVF 18.5.00.). When the research commenced, PDVTG meetings were held in the PMBC building in which housing services is based – the penultimate meeting in the observation period was held in a PCSP building and the last in a 'big imposing room in the Town Hall'. PMADVF meetings were held in a public house, owned by the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge Development Worker as the

[83] Six Management Committee meetings were convened over the research period. The researcher attended some but Management Committee meetings are not described here.

research commenced and thereafter in the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline's premises.

The PDVTG met bi-monthly (though did meet quarterly as the research period commenced). Nine PDVTG meetings were convened during the research period – in December 1998; March 1999; May 1999; September 1999; November 1999; January 2000; March 2000; May 2000; and July 2000. The PDVTG assembled on two further occasions in this period to discuss a domestic violence drama production and to discuss the Community Safety Action Plan on domestic violence[84]. The PMADVF met quarterly. Five meetings were convened in the research period – in April 1999; October 1999; January 2000; April 2000; and July 2000. One further meeting had been scheduled for July 1999. At the last minute, this meeting was cancelled. The SDVF met bi-monthly. Six SDVF Full Forum meetings were convened over the research period – in June 1999; September 1999; January 2000; March 2000; May 2000; and July 2000. The SDVF also assembled in November 1999 for its AGM.

Five of seven PDVTG meetings; no PMADVF meeting; and each SDVF meeting had an agenda. Sometimes, PDVTG agendas were contained in PDVTG minutes. Full Forum agendas were handed out as the meeting commenced. All but one PDVTG meeting; three of five PMADVF meetings; and each SDVF meeting began with introductions. PDVTG meetings usually lasted 1 ½ hours; PMADVF meetings usually lasted 1 ½ hours; and SDVF Full Forum meetings usually lasted two hours. PDVTG and SDVF meetings were minuted – PMADVF meetings were not. The Chair minuted PDVTG meetings and attendees minuted SDVF meetings until an administrative worker took post. PDVTG minutes were distributed by the Chair, before each forthcoming meeting, to individuals and organizations on a 'Topic Group Contact List'. When the research began there were 20 individuals and organizations on this list – there were 22 when it ended. Since November 1997 Full Forum minutes have been obtainable on request or in Management Committee meetings.

Finally, the SDVF has occupied various premises over time but in the summer of 1999 it established an independent office base. Neither Pittplace initiative has had an office base.

[84] Since these gatherings cannot be seen to be 'Topic Group meetings' que such, they will not be discussed below.

So, there were numerous structural differences between the initiatives researched. Perhaps, then, as Hague and colleagues[85] have said, there is no multi-agency domestic violence model.

3. Attendance In The Initiatives Researched.

Here, eighteen main research findings about attendance in Pittplace and Steelsite are set out. As mentioned, these findings were seen through both research observations in each initiative and research interviews conducted in attending agencies and organizations.

Table 5A summarizes attendance in Pittplace and Steelsite.

Attendance in each initiative researched differed in the research period – different agencies and organizations attended the PDVTG to those attending the PMADVF, and those attending the SDVF were different again.

Interestingly, no further differences were seen about attendance in the initiatives researched. Rather, the same points can be raised about attendance in *each* such initiative:

1) Numerous agencies, organizations and/or departments in agencies attended the multi-agency initiatives researched. Fourteen agencies, organizations (and/or departments in) attended the PDVTG; 13 attended the PMADVF; and 28 attended SDVF Full Forum meetings in the research period.

2) Notwithstanding this numerous attendance, some Pittplace and Steelsite agencies and organizations did not attend the initiatives researched in the research period. Those agencies and organizations on a PDVTG 'contact list' and receiving PDVTG minutes but not attending in the research period were the Hillshire Police Authority and the Pittplace Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Helpline. Those that were never on a contact list; never received minutes; and never attended the PDVTG included voluntary organizations such as NCH Action for Children; MIND; the NSPCC; and Victim Support, as well as schools; the Local Education Authority; the Area Child Protection Committee; sentencers; and local solicitors.

Individuals who never attended a PMADVF meeting in the research period but were on a 'contact list' were from voluntary organizations, Support and Survival; WISH; and NCH Action for Children, and from statutory agencies, the PMBC Housing Service; the

[85] Hague and colleagues' publications are those mentioned in Chapter Two – Hague et al. (1995a), Hague et al. (1995b, 1996); Hague and Malos (1997, 1998); Hague (1997, 1999, 2000).

TABLE 5A: Those Agencies And Organizations Attending The Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group, The Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum And The Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum In The Research Period.

Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group	Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum	Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum
		Hillshire Police
Hillshire Police Domestic Violence Unit	Hillshire Police Domestic Violence Unit	Hillshire Police Domestic Violence Unit
Hillshire Probation Service		Hillshire Probation Service
Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)		
		SCC Equality Unit
		SCC Community Safety Team
PMBC Social Services Department		SCC Social Services Department
PMBC Housing Department	PMBC Housing Department	SCC Housing Department
	Voluntary Housing Organization	
PMBC Education Department		SCC Education Department
Pittplace Community & Priority Services NHS Trust	Pittplace Community & Priority Services NHS Trust	Community Health Steelsite
Pittplace District General Hospital NHS Trust	Pittplace District General Hospital NHS Trust	
Pittplace Health Authority	Pittplace Health Authority	Steelsite Health
		Steelsite Women's Aid
	Pittplace Women & Children's Refuge	Omega Refuge
	Pittplace Victim Support	Steelsite Victim Support
	Home Valley Victim Support	
		Out of School Network
Pittplace Domestic Violence Group	Pittplace Domestic Violence Group	Alpha Domestic Violence Project
		Beta Domestic Violence Project
		Gamma Domestic Violence Project
Young Women's Project	Young Women's Project	Steelsite Rape & Sexual Abuse Counselling Service
Age Concern		Steelsite Family Services Unit
		Self Defence for Women
		Action Against Men's Violence (Steelsite)
		Steelsite Working Women's Opportunities Project
		Runaway Productions
		Shelter Homeless 2 Home
		Alternatives to Violence Project
		Firm A Solicitors
	Trainee Solicitor	Firm B Solicitors
		Area Child Protection Committee
Pittplace Community Safety Partnership	Pittplace Community Safety Partnership	

Hillshire Probation Service; and the Pittplace Community & Priority Services NHS Trust (Psychological Health Care Service). Agencies that never attended and were never on a contact list were voluntary organizations such as the Pittplace Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Helpline and MIND, as well as Surestart; the Hillshire Police

Authority; schools; the Local Education Authority; the Area Child Protection Committee; sentencers; and the CPS.

Likewise, some agencies and organizations in Steelsite did not attend the SDVF. Most conspicuous non-attendees were the CPS; sentencers; the NSPCC; MIND; NCH Action for Children; Relate; and Surestart. Further, of those numerous voluntary organizations in Steelsite that have an interest in domestic violence and might have attended the Full Forum – over 50 such organizations receive 'Forum mailings'[86] – several, including an Asian Women's Refuge; a Women's Counselling and Therapy Service; a Black Women's Counselling Service; a Young Women's Housing Project; Steelsite Alcohol Advisory Service; and Voluntary Action Steelsite, did not attend.

In each initiative, then, the same agencies and organizations did not attend – court personnel; schools; Local Education Authorities; and national voluntary organizations, such as the NSPCC and MIND.

3) On each Pittplace and Steelsite initiative, attendees included both specialists in domestic violence *and* those encountering domestic violence within much broader service provision – domestic violence organizations such as Women's Aid, other refuges, community support organizations, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline attended, as did agencies such as Hillshire Police, the PMBC and the SCC.

4) Statutory, voluntary and private sector agencies and organizations attended initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite. Most attending the PDVTG were statutory sector – just four voluntary sector organizations attended, but two of these only attended one meeting. The PDVTG had no private sector attendees. PMADVF attendees were split between the voluntary and statutory sectors – six attendees were voluntary sector and six were statutory sector. One, Firm X solicitors, was private sector. Most attendees in SDVF Full Forum meetings were from the voluntary sector – 16 were voluntary organizations, ten were statutory sector and two, both solicitors' firms, were private sector. There are more voluntary sector organizations in Steelsite than in Pittplace. Notwithstanding, the SDVF has clearly maintained much more solid voluntary sector attendance than either Pittplace initiative.

5) On each initiative researched, some agencies were good attendees but some were poor attendees.

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[86] See Chapter Three for a descriptive outline of Steelsite domestic violence features, including local voluntary service provision.

Tables 5B, 5C and 5D, contained in Appendix H, set out attendance in each meeting in each initiative researched.

So, on the PDVTG, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline; the CPS; and the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge were good attendees. Hillshire Probation Service and Pittplace Health Authority were poor attendees. Age Concern and the Young Women's Project were also bad attendees. On the PMADVF, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline; the PDGH NHS Trust; and the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge were good attendees. Hillshire Police and Pittplace Victim Support were quite good attendees. Solicitor Firm, X; the PCSP; the Young Women's Project; Pittplace Health; and a Voluntary Housing Organization were poor attendees. On the SDVF, the Beta and Alpha Domestic Violence Projects were good attendees, as were Action Against Men's Violence Steelsite (AAMVS) and Hillshire Police. The SCC Housing Department was also a good attendee. Numerous agencies and organizations were poor attendees.

6) An associated point is that certain changing attendance meeting-to-meeting characterized attendance on the PMADVF and the SDVF. Thirteen agencies, organizations, departments (and/or sections of)[87] attended the PMADVF, but just five attended more than two of five meetings.

Some PMADVF research interviewees suggested this changing attendance too:

> Researcher: "...Who tends to attend Multi-Agency Forum meetings?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Oh gosh..."
>
> Researcher: "...Sorry, it's not..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Well, I mean, it sounds stupid, but it honestly depends from meeting to meeting, because. I suppose there's a small core group of people who come and – the refuge and whatever. But it does tend to float about a bit, with different people coming..." (Interviewee 15).

Others did not:

> Researcher: "...Who tends to attend the Multi-Agency Forum?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...There is the Domestic Violence Group, there's always usually two people at least from there. There's myself and there are workers from the Women and Children's Refuge, police officers, health visitors, midwives. Occasionally, someone from Pittplace Psychological Services, particularly the woman who runs the perpetrators' group. Housing, someone from housing, because I know they have a designated domestic violence officer. So she usually attends. That is the main body I think..."
>
> Researcher: "...So it's generally the same people and agencies who attend?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Yes, yes. There's sometimes someone from social services and from the mental health team, someone usually there from that..." (Interviewee 16).
>
> Researcher: "...So who tends to attend Domestic Violence Multi-Agency Forum meetings?..."

[87] See below.

Interviewee: "...The police, Victim Support, social services, the, [Interviewee 17] who is project midwife and child protection manager from the Pittplace Hospital. They're the main ones. And obviously the Domestic Violence Group as well..."

Researcher: "...Right, so is attendance fairly consistent?..."

Interviewee: "...Yes, I believe it is, yes, yes..." (Interviewee 19).

Though these interviews suggest that attendance does not change, research observations suggest that attendance *did* change in the research period.

Likewise, some Steelsite agencies attended all or most SDVF meetings and certain other agencies drifted in and out. Of the 28 agencies and organizations that attended SDVF Full Forum meetings, most attended just one or two meetings – ten attended just one and eight attended two. Only the Alpha and Beta Domestic Violence Projects; Action Against Men's Violence (Steelsite); and Hillshire Police attended each meeting[88].

7) Agencies could be both an attendee and a non-attendee and, also, both a good and a bad attendee on each initiative researched. This happened as one department attended but others in the same agency did not and as some departments were good attendees and others in the same agency were poor attendees. So, the Pittplace Community and Priority Services and the Pittplace District General Hospital (PDGH) attended the PDVTG from the NHS Trust, but no other Primary Health Care services (GPs, sexual health practitioners, health visitors) attended. Some PMBC departments were good attendees but others were poor – PMBC Housing Services attended each meeting in the research period but the PMBC Social Services Department attended four meetings and the PMBC Education Department attended just three meetings.

Likewise, the Pittplace Community and Priority Services and the Pittplace District General Hospital (PDGH) attended the PMADVF from the NHS Trust, but no other Primary Health Care services attended. PMBC Housing Services attended each meeting in the research period but the social services and education departments of the Council did not attend.

Finally, there were attendees from three Hillshire Police districts, four divisional stations and one special unit in SDVF meetings, but one further police district and two further police stations (as well as the Hillshire Police Authority) did not attend. Community Health Steelsite health visitors attended, but numerous other Primary Health Care services did not attend – midwives; sexual health practitioners; mental health practitioners; and GPs certainly did not. Some SCC departments were good attendees but others were poor. The SCC Housing Department and Community

[88] Steelsite interviewees' thoughts on this are set out below.

Partnership Unit were good attendees, attending five and four meetings each, but the social services and education departments only attended two meetings and the SCC Community Safety Team attended just one Full Forum.

8) An associated point is that just some *sections* of departments attended the initiatives – mostly, these sections were *different*.

So, the client services section of the housing services attended the PDVTG but no housing advice section or area housing offices attended. The mental health section of social services attended but no child protection section attended. Just one section of the Hospital Trust attended – the child protection/midwifery section attended but the A&E Department did not.

Likewise, the housing advice section of the housing services attended the PMADVF but the client services section did not, nor did area housing offices. The child protection/midwifery section of the Hospital Trust attended but the A&E Department did not.

Finally, a housing department area housing office attended SDVF Full Forum meetings, but the service's homelessness and re-housing sections did not. The child protection section of social services attended but no mental health or community care section attended and the Education Welfare Service of the education department attended but, as in Pittplace, no other sections attended.

Some attendees mentioned these points about departments and sections in research interviews. Discussing how the Pittplace Community and Priority Services NHS Trust became involved in the PDVTG, this interviewee said:

> "...some other Health Trust people were involved, you see. I think there's been the thinking, 'well the Trust comes'. But, of course, this is a different bit of it..." (Interviewee Five).

Discussing PMBC Social Service Department's attendance on the PDVTG, Interviewee Nine said:

> "...I think we need some representatives, representation from social services other than [name]. Because, although [name] is very good, she looks, her primary remit is mental health issues around domestic violence – rather than tenancy support and, you know, like family support and that sort of thing..." (Interviewee Nine).

Likewise:

> Researcher: "...Is there any agency, do you feel, which is notable by its absence [on the SDVF?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...There are some agencies which have difficulty in getting representation across all their strands. So like Health...[name] comes regularly, but because Health is so fragmented now, she can only represent one bit of it – and things like getting at health workers, sort of local work, that's very difficult for us. Education again is quite difficult because we'd like to have people from schools attending but, because

> schools are fairly autonomous now, we get someone from Education attending...There is a difficulty in getting the sorts of people that you'd want, especially at the information sharing [meetings] because there's just not the time or the resources within those organizations. So yes, there will always be problems in getting everyone that you'd want to attend to attend, yes..." (Interviewee 38).

So, points five to eight highlight that each initiative faced bad attendance from some agencies, organizations, departments or sections of departments.

Research interviewees were questioned about good and poor attendance in the initiatives researched. Some interviewees did not (perhaps, could not) name certain agencies, organizations or services as poor attendees. Others, though, were more prepared to name names. Interestingly, interviewees named as poor attendees the *same* agencies, organizations and services that were seen through research observations and listed earlier as poor attendees:

> "...I'm always surprised that there's nobody from the social services department on the, at the meetings...." (Interviewee One).
>
> "...What I'd like to see is more health and more social services involvement..." (Interviewee Two).
>
> "...I think there's a gap in relation to Health Promotions now..." (Interviewee Nine).
>
> "...Education's been hit and miss..." (Interviewee Eleven).
>
> "...It would be nice to see perhaps NSPCC, for example. Possibly Barnardos..." (Interviewee Eleven).
>
> "...Well I think Education, they don't seem to get to much really..." (Interviewee 17).

Finally, questioned about whether 'the CPS is involved', the SDVF Chair said:

> "...No...that is one of the major gaps, that we would like to have someone regularly from..." (Interviewee 38).

Other interviewees volunteered thoughts on 'poor' attendance:

> "... It's very rare that there's anybody from social services at the [PMADV] Forum...[and the] Education department, you know, they're not fantastic at providing anybody to come..." (Interviewee 18).

Questioned about 'which agencies tend to attend', one SDVF interviewee said:

> "...The area where we've always been least...the area that's least [represented] is really the Health...course, the other area is Education, as well..." (Interviewee 34).

Questioned about changing membership in SDVF meetings, another said:

> "...Nobody comes from Health..." (Interviewee 40).

Discussing the SDVF as a 'big gathering', another interviewee said:

> "...I don't think there's any medical people that attend. And that's an interesting one in itself, actually. I've never thought of that – I don't see why they shouldn't..." (Interviewee 37).

Finally, explaining 'what the SDVF is', the Steelsite Health Authority attendee discussed the time before she attended:

> "...there was a period when there wasn't much contact between the Heath Authority in particular and the Domestic Violence Forum..." (Interviewee 41).

9) In each initiative researched most *good* attendees were voluntary sector organizations. In the SDVF, especially, of the ten agencies attending three or more meetings, five were voluntary sector.

Do research interviews assist us in understanding good and poor attendance on the initiatives researched? The two 'best' attendees in PDVTG meetings were the PMBC Housing Department and the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline. Interviewees in each were questioned about attendance.

First, the Housing Department attendee was questioned about how the Department and she as an individual 'became involved':

> "...Originally, there was a small group. And I'm not really sure I how got involved, other than that through Housing the warden of the Refuge is employed. And the Refuge Committee wanted stronger links with Housing...and I think it came about really due to key people being involved who all had an interest in at the time..." (Interviewee Nine).

The Group/Helpline Interviewee said that:

> "...I think I've only missed probably two out of all the meetings we've had..."

She also said that "...hopefully..." another Group/Helpline attendee attends the meetings that she cannot attend. Questioned about whether attendance on the PDVTG was in her job description, she said:

> "...I think very much so, because we're one of the hands on people that exist..." (Interviewee Eleven).

Two of the 'best' attendees in SDVF Full Forum meetings were the SCC Housing Department and Hillshire Police. Again, interviewees in each were questioned about attendance. Questioned about how 'membership' of the SDVF is 'important', the SCC Housing Department interviewee said:

> "...The more people who're involved then the greater the impact it's going to have...I mean if Housing didn't go then I think that other agencies would be sitting there thinking well they haven't got a policy, they haven't got anything, they don't do anything...so it's important, that..." (Interviewee 38).

A Hillshire Police interviewee said:

> Researcher: "...Would you like to attend [SDVF Full Forum meetings] regularly, do you feel you need to attend regularly?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Again, the networking's got to be kept up, we definitely need to go at least once a year[89]..."
>
> Researcher: "...So you feel that, from a networking perspective, that it's important that you do attend?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Definitely yes, because the people that we speak to on a daily basis, such as the refuges, the women's health groups, they all attend..." (Interviewee 31).

[89] Clearly, though, Hillshire Police attended a lot more than just once a year.

Interviewees in poorer attendees on the PDVTG and the SDVF were also questioned about attendance. First, the Pittplace Health Authority Interviewee:

Researcher: "...So when and how did this agency get involved in the Domestic Violence Topic Group?..."

Interviewee: "...I think it started because [name] (who used to work in health promotions) was one of the enthusiasts that got the work started in the first place. I think there was a strategy that was developed and she was the person who wrote it and was one of the, kind of, leading lights in it. So she worked for the Health Authority. So we got involved at the stage. And I think that's probably before the Topic Group got established, I think the Topic Group might have been established as a result of that work. Somebody from the Topic Group wrote to the Health Authority about two years ago I suppose. And at that point I was nominated to be, kind of, the official person on the Group from here. And [name] continued [attending] whilst she was still here, as an enthusiast. So I think you know we were there from the beginning..."

Researcher: "...Is there any procedure in terms of attendance and reporting back if you're not able to go – does someone else go in your place?..."

Interviewee: "...They don't no [but] there isn't really anybody else who's at all involved in the work. It used to be OK whilst [name] was here in health promotions. But nobody seems to have picked it up since she left. So I don't think it's reasonable for anybody else to go...there isn't anybody else who would be in a position to contribute anything at all really...for reporting back here, I tell people that I work with most immediately what I do. But it doesn't as a matter of routine, it doesn't, sort of, get known throughout the Health Authority what the [Topic] Group is up to..."

Researcher: "...Do you think that that's a problem?

Interviewee: "...I don't really no. I'm not sure that there's a particular reason why, across the Health Authority as a whole, everybody needs to keep up to date with what the Topic Group is doing..."

Researcher: "...Do you think that there's a need for each agency to represented at each meeting – for regular attendance by the same agencies at each Topic Group meeting?..."

Interviewee: "...I think for the core agencies yes, I think it's important. But I see the Health Authority as being, not peripheral to it, but not one of the core agencies. I mean I think it's important that, you know, the police go; and probation; and [name] the chair of it; and somebody from the Domestic Violence Group, the charity. I think it's important that those people regularly go. And that other people sort of go when they can and they keep up to date with it and contribute when they can..." (Interviewee Twelve).

What about another poor attendee, the PMBC Education Department?

Researcher: "...So what were the original reasons for this agency getting involved in the Topic Group?..."

Interviewee: "...I really don't know. It came to our line manager, [name], who's the principal. There was no one, no one really took it up at the time. It was...a number of years ago and we didn't really think it was our remit. And I'm still not sure why I'm on that particular group. I just got it really because nobody else was available to go. I did think that there would be more about domestic violence and child protection, which I'm particularly interested in. So I'm a bit perplexed as to why I'm on the Group..."

Then:

Researcher: "...So is there a procedure in terms of attendance and reporting back when you're not able to attend – does anyone go instead of you?..."

Interviewee: "...No. No, nobody goes instead..."

Researcher: "...Do you think that that's acceptable? Would you prefer...?..."

Interviewee: "...Well it is for our agency because we don't really have anything to put into the meetings..."

Researcher: "...Do you think that it is important that there is regular attendance of the same agency at each meeting or not?..."

Interviewee: "...For our agency, no. I don't think we're particularly important to the meetings..." (Interviewee One).

The PMBC Education Department attendee on the PDVTG was a manager but the SCC Education Department attendee on the SDVF was a practitioner. Interestingly, the Steelsite attendee voiced different opinions about attendance in a research interview:

Researcher: "...How did the [SCC Education Department] get involved [in the SDVF]?..."

Interviewee[90]: "...The way that [the SDVF] had been, by our previous management it was seen that it was [the previous attendees'] baby, it was her sort of special interest, and we'll just patronize her a bit by giving lip service to whatever she feeds back to us or allowing her to go to meetings. But not really buying into it at all. And I felt that if she went [moved employment] and it wasn't picked up, then it would be an opportunity lost really, for our service. So I asked around – 'would anyone else be interested in standing in?' – and I ended up doing it. Our management has changed to a large extent and now are much more sympathetic and see that there is a need for us to have closer links [with the SDVF]. But there's still no, as the way things stand at the moment, there's no recognition. It's not part of our job-description, or my job description. It's not taken into consideration in terms of my caseload. So I'm still expected to do the work the same as everyone else. And the meetings that I attend and what I get involved with come secondary to that. So work has to come first. So very often I feel as if I'm having to apologize that I can't go to meetings because on balance I really can't justify the time for sitting in a meeting when there are cases piling up..." (Interviewee 29).

Subsequently:

Researcher: "...How often are you able to attend Forum meetings?..."

Interviewee: "...There are times when, you know, when I know a meeting's coming up and I can keep my diary clear...[but] I also have, we've got a service to deliver...So, it's quite difficult. Whereas, if, if it, if I was, you know, if the domestic violence stuff was taken into consideration, you know, that would be kept free. And so I feel like I'm, I feel like I'm juggling. And I also, I'm conscious that my immediate line-manager doesn't quite see the significance really of domestic violence and the cases that we have. And I know that she wants, when we leave our office we write on the board where we're going and what time we're expected back. And I remember her saying, looking at it, the board as I was writing saying 'oh another meeting – another domestic violence meeting', sort of 'ooh, what do you think you're doing?', you know, 'don't forget who you are and what you're supposed to be doing!'. So I feel that my immediate line manager is not sympathetic, say, as the new head of service. So I feel that I've got to, I'm trying to be ever so careful. I'm trying to please, in a way it's like trying to please everybody and feeling that I'm not really pleasing anybody. I'm certainly not pleasing the Domestic Violence Forum and I'm not pleasing myself either. Because of the constraints that I've got placed on me and my role..." (Interviewee 29).

Unfortunately, no interviews were conducted in agencies and organizations that did not attend the PDVTG. But interviews were conducted in, perhaps the most conspicuous non-attendee in Steelsite, the CPS:

Researcher: "...What's been the level of involvement from the CPS in the Forum?..."

Interviewee: "...Erm. Well, years ago, five, six years ago I (or one of my colleagues did) used to try and attend the meetings and I attended many meetings. And I did sort of, if I was asked to, I did speak on occasions to the Group about [the] CPS and so on...It came, there came a time really, a couple of years ago, when we felt that we couldn't

[90] Initially, the interviewee explains how another Educational Welfare Officer had attended the Forum "...out of her own interest..." and that this representative has since moved employment.

commit ourselves to attending all the meetings. And I haven't been to a meeting for a time. But obviously they know who I am and where I am. And I think what we said to them, said at the time, was 'look don't expect to see us at these meetings but we are available if you wanted some specific CPS input'. And obviously we're still getting all the, all the information from them...So we're in touch. And I mean certainly [co-ordinator] knows how to get hold of me. But we weren't really able to keep up that commitment...".

Subsequently:

"...For the, sort of, whole Forum, there may be meetings we would attend. I'm certainly not saying we've said we can never attend another meeting, you know, but. If we were invited because there was an issue that was specifically related to us then we'd be there. But generally, I think, probably we will, we will certainly be involved in the [proposed] criminal justice [sub-group], you know. That's been run past our DCP and, I think, she feels that would be a proper thing for us to be involved with. And that, presumably, will be the police, probation – I mean they're really the agencies who (sic) we link in with, and obviously largely the police, really..." (Interviewee 22).

An interviewee in a poor attendee, the Gamma Domestic Violence Project, also distinguished between Full Forum and other Forum meetings:

Researcher: "...Would you like to attend [Full Forum meetings] regularly, do you feel that you need to attend regularly?

Interviewee: "...Erm, well, what, I don't think they're that regular..."

Researcher: "...Right..."

Interviewee: "...They don't seem to be very often. What I'd like to do is attend the Women's Support Section meetings...".

Subsequently:

Researcher: "...You say it's important to attend the Support Section – how do you find that valuable to you?..."

Interviewee: "...Well, sort of, talking to other groups that are doing similar work and exchanging information about various options and what's happening, you know, legislation. Usually funding as well, because that's quite a big thing at the moment for our project. And it was last year with the other two projects...." (Interviewee 26).

Other domestic violence project attendees in Steelsite, though, had different opinions about Full Forum meetings:

Researcher: "...Do you feel it's important that you attend [the SDVF] regularly?..."

Interviewee: "...Yes, it's, particularly being new and our project, although it's not a brand new project, it's only had...one worker – we had one part time worker up until August – so our expansion is quite new. And that's been very important for me and my colleagues to, you know, attend the Full Forum to meet people, to see what's going on around Steelsite..." (Interviewee 23).

Researcher: "...Why do you think it's important that you attend [the SDVF]?..."

Interviewee: "...Well I think it's important as a whole. I mean the experiences that you can learn from the Forum, the input that's given by a lot of people is very useful. So you can take it on a personal level, you know if you want to network on a personal level and get yourself known and around, that's you know that's the place to be. More importantly, on a work basis it gives you that opportunity to find out what other projects are thinking of doing, what they've done and have failed, what they've done and have been successful, around areas of funding, and not just the projects working specifically with domestic abuse but it actually covers other areas where women are involved, there's you know Victim Support, the Rape Crisis Centre, the refuges. And it also brings together some statutory workers into that Forum which I think is very important – probation, health, police, housing department. And I think that's a

> really important...So it's certainly a sharing environment. And also to throw around ideas, you know...the Forum is used, you know, is there to throw ideas out and for us to throw ideas in...So yes it's very important to attend – obviously on a work basis, as well as personal development..." (Interviewee 39).

An interviewee in the SRSACS, a poor attendee, also seemed to see attendance as important. Discussing the SRSACS's attendance, the interviewee mentioned that she 'hoped to have more involvement'. The interview continued:

> Researcher: "...Do you feel that that's important?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Very much so, yes. Very much so..."
>
> Researcher: "...Why do you feel that it's important?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...I think to keep, to keep the agenda of, to keep rape on the agenda (and sexual abuse) – to keep that there. I think to stop it becoming, some places, in some places, not in Steelsite but in other places – like I've worked in [names] as well – that forums can become a club for statutory organizations. Because statutory organizations have the money and the time to release paid workers to go to meetings. Whereas most voluntary sector organizations have neither the money nor the time to do that. So I think that it's very important that the voice of the voluntary sector is represented....".

Questioned about whether it 'matters' to the Forum whether the SRSACS attend 'regularly', this interviewee continued:

> "...I think it would, yes. I think there would be a problem if the voluntary groups didn't attend. And I know, I know there are concerns about other groups that don't regularly attend. I've been around, I've heard the concerns about those groups. At the same time, I don't think there's a, when other groups don't attend – for example [Asian Women's Refuge] don't attend regularly – I don't think there's quite an understanding of why and the pressures on those groups. Which I think there needs to be, there needs to be sort of support for groups to attend.
>
> Because, for some groups to attend, it means shutting down the service for a day, if they're very short staffed. I mean we have five part time members of staff and the office is staffed three days a week. And we only have three paid counsellors. So it's difficult for us....".

Subsequently:

> Researcher: "...I wonder what they could do about that – how the Forum could deal with that situation?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...I think it's very difficult, yes. Pay people to attend! No, I do think it's very difficult...." (Interviewee 24).

A main research finding seen through the researcher's observations in the research period and through research interviews is that some agencies and organizations appeared not to see their attendance as needed on the initiatives researched or in some initiative meetings, and also appeared to see it as acceptable that just certain departments and sections attended the initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite. The research interviews do assist us in understanding both good and poor attendance and suggest possible explanations about *why* agencies and organizations see their attendance as such. The main finding seen here about attendance on Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives and explanations on it are further examined in Chapter Six.

Reflecting further on attendance in the initiatives researched, what points are raised about individual attendance?

10) One point is that, perhaps unsurprisingly, most individual attendees on each initiative researched were women.

11) Individual attendance on each initiative changed in the research period as individuals stopped attending and others took their place.

12) Individual attendance on each initiative also changed as different individuals from the same agency/organization attended. Few agencies and organizations had one, established person attending the initiatives researched.

Just one individual from some agencies attended the PDVTG. One housing department; social service department; education department; PDGH NHS Trust; and Pittplace Health Authority individual attended – no other individuals from these agencies attended. But four Domestic Violence Group/Helpline representatives attended the PDVTG; four Women and Children's Refuge representatives attended; two Community and Priority Services NHS Trust representatives attended; two PCSP representatives attended; and three Hillshire police representatives attended.

Likewise, two Domestic Violence Group/Helpline representatives; three Hospital Trust representatives; three Women and Children's Refuge representatives; four Hillshire Police representatives; and four Community and Priority Services NHS Trust representatives attended the PMADVF. This changing individual attendance, though, becomes less surprising as one considers first, what some research interviewees said about *why* they attended the PMADVF and, secondly, what interviewees said about 'what the PMADVF is'. First, on why attendees attend, the four Community and Priority Services NHS Trust attendees (CPNs) certainly appeared to attend as and when each considered attendance 'appropriate', "...valuable..." or "...helpful..." (Interviewee 20):

> Researcher: "...So when you attend meetings of the Forum who do you represent as a CPN?..."
> Interviewee: "...I don't represent anybody else as a CPN. My involvement was entirely because we were invited to attend, a flyer was sent out. And we thought it would be appropriate to at least go to find out if there's anything that we could do. Because we do come across women who are victims of domestic violence and we wondered whether it would be appropriate for us to attend. And it turns out there's no other CPNs there..."
> Researcher: "...When you say 'we'?..."
> Interviewee: "...Right, me and my, there are two, I share an office with two other CPNs and all of us have either attended or have tried to attend. I think we've all attended at some point..." (Interviewee 20).

On 'what the PMADVF is', interviews also suggested that attendance is about individual needs rather than agency representation. To the question, "...what is the Pittplace Multi-Agency Forum', attendees said:

"...Right. It's a forum that meets quarterly, four times a year, and...is sort of an open forum that allows anybody that's involved in the field of domestic violence to attend, to network, to meet other people who're obviously dealing with this sort of thing. And we have guest speakers...we generally have guest speakers and then questions at the end, and. Just basically so as we all know one another and what's sort of happening..." (Interviewee 18).

"...Erm, it's a group of professionals who get together to discuss issues around domestic violence, share information, examples of good practice and look at services that are available in the Pittplace area..." (Interviewee 16).

"...Well it's, it's a means of getting together with all the different agencies to share views and pick up useful information really...." (Interviewee 17).

Finally, different individuals from the same agency/organization attended the SDVF in the research period. On the SDVF, four Beta Domestic Violence Project people; three Alpha Project people; two Action Against Men's Violence (Steelsite) people; ten Hillshire Police officers (though as one interviewee observed, "...there's a lot of [police] in Steelsite, there's hundreds of them..." (Interviewee 37); five Family Services Unit people; two Community Partnership Unit people; three Women's Aid people; three Community Health Steelsite people; and two education department representatives attended SDVF meetings. Further, of the 58 representatives in attendance, 39 attended just once and only one attended each meeting over this period.

Some SDVF interviewees also noticed this drifting in and out of people (and of agencies, mentioned earlier). Responding to the question 'is it generally the same agencies and people who attend Full Forum meetings – does membership change very much?', these interviewees said:

"...Erm, no, I think, yes, there are some consistent faces. But I also see, you know, different people at meetings..." (Interviewee 23).

"...There's what I would call a core of the same people and then you get, other people will come in...It varies, but there is a core membership. But then other people will always come in and that's always good to see..." (Interviewee 38).

"...There's a core, my perception is that there is a core of women that, particularly the ones working very much, you know, that their central dictate is to be working with women and domestic abuse – the hostels, the refuges, the projects. But there's a periphery of people that, you know, new faces that come in and disappear...." (Interviewee 39).

"...The membership does change, yes. I mean in terms of quite a lot of the voluntary groups, different people attend – but there again, they're all faces I know, it's very rare that I don't recognise, that I don't know somebody. I mean I've been around for quite a while now and people know me..." (Interviewee 40).

However, not all interviewees noticed changing attendance:

Researcher: "...Do you think that membership and attendance at Full Forum meetings changes very much?..."

Interviewee: "...It seems to be the same kinds of people that go. Sometimes we can have a lot of different people going, other times we don't. And I think that's just because they have, you know, they're voluntary workers and sometimes they have other meetings to go to that week and they just can't go to everything...." (Interviewee 30).

Researcher: "...Do those people and agencies who attend Full Forum meetings change very much – is it generally the same faces at each meeting?..."

Interviewee: "...Hmmm, pretty much yes. Not every body comes to each meeting, but..." (Interviewee 41).

Researcher: "...Is it generally the same people and agencies who attend Full Forum meetings?..."

Interviewee: "...Yes I think so, tend to be yes..." (Interviewee 34).

Responding to the question 'do you think it's problematic that there's changing membership at Full SDVF meetings?', these Full Forum attendees said this about drifting in and out:

"...Oh no, I think that's good. I think you always going to have a central core of people who attend anything regularly, who. But I also think it's very good to have fresh faces and people who, you know, don't need to come to every meeting but maybe come for special presentations or whatever. And I think that's a good mix..." (Interviewee 23).

"...I don't think it is because they are really an information sharing, I mean the more people that come, then the wider the information is disseminated. It would be more difficult for the management committee because there's the continuity of the decision making so that would make it more difficult..." (Interviewee 38).

"...No I would say that changing membership is very positive. If you, I mean, if you've just got a group of women... if you've got a group of people that is static then inevitably, my belief is that ideas can become static. If you get some new blood, some fresh ideas flowing through it can actually sort of generate, you know, it generates a little bit of electricity, if you like. So I think it's very important that membership should be as open and varied as possible..." (Interviewee 39).

"...I don't think it's as much of a problem as it could be..." (Interviewee 40).

"...I haven't felt it to be that much of a problem. And I think it's partly because it's relatively small – well it feels relatively small – and it feels like a group where people do know each other and also have, sort of, interconnections that are beyond the Forum ..." (Interviewee 41).

One point raised in both the PMADVF interviews and these SDVF interviews is that attendees' opinions about drifting in and out depended on their opinions about 'outcomes'. Interviewee 38 explicitly distinguishes between changing attendance in 'joint talking' and 'joint working' initiatives but other interviewees' opinions clearly centred on their opinions about the initiatives' possible 'broader consequences'.

13) Another point raised in the interviews set out under point 12 is that those attending the initiatives researched seemed have 'interconnections beyond' those initiatives. Some attendees were, seemingly, 'meeting in different forums'.

As interviewee 41 discusses when questioned about accommodating newcomers:

"...I'm just trying to think about who I know who's come along recently as a new member and actually why I think of them – they tend to be people I know from other situations! Which, that's something about people who are active with things around women or something. So it doesn't feel as foreign as walking into some other meetings. And I'm sure that's not true of everybody... but certainly when I walked in there was (sic) familiar faces, even though I'd never been to that forum...." (Interviewee 41).

Other interviewees support this point. Discussing whether someone attends in her place when she cannot attend a PDVTG meeting, a DVO said:

"...I mean the daft thing is that we see each other at so many different meetings – whether it's the Topic Group, the Refuge committee, the domestic violence Group [the PMADVF], or whatever

else it is – we've got quite a good, ongoing contact. So if you miss one meeting, sometimes you don't even realize you've missed it because it's almost continuous from one meeting to another...as I say, you don't really notice the gap because you are meeting each other at meetings..." (Interviewee Two).

Discussing the meeting setting and the need to 'get into meetings', this PMADVF interviewee mentions that:

"...And there are people on the group that I know because I know them from other..."

The interview continues:

Researcher: "...Other forums?..."

Interviewee: "...Other things that I've been involved in. Or because I worked with them as a colleague somewhere else. So there are people there that I already know, which helps. So it doesn't feel like you're walking into a room full of strangers sort of thing..."

Researcher: "...Right. Do you get the impression that most people do actually know each other from other multi-agency settings?..."

Interviewee: "...A lot of people do yes. Because it's quite a small town in terms of that, then people do know each other..." (Interviewee 15).

Other interviewees said that they attended multi-agency committees on drug abuse, racial harassment and/or child protection.

14) Both managers and practitioners attended the initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite. Most individuals attending the PDVTG from the statutory sector were middle-managers – statutory sector practitioners did not attend. Just Hillshire Police were the exception here – police managers did not attend but police practitioners, DVOs, did. Individuals attending the PDVTG from the voluntary sector tended to be both managers and practitioners. So, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline and Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge Chairs attended, but these organizations' co-ordinators/development workers and volunteers also attended.

Organizational representatives on the PMADVF tended to be practitioners. Just three managers attended in the research period – the Group/Helpline Chair, a PDGH NHS Trust Child Protection Manager/Project Midwife and the PCSP Director, who attended once to discuss the PCPS. Amusingly, the most senior person – a Hillshire Police Divisional Commander – seen in the initiatives researched in Pittplace and Steelsite attended the PMADVF.

Both statutory sector middle-managers and statutory sector practitioners attended the SDVF, often attending together. So, SCC managers, such as a housing department area housing office manager and a social services department child protection manager attended, as did SCC practitioners such as Education Welfare Officers. Likewise, both Hillshire Police Inspectors and DVOs attended SDVF Full Forum meetings. Unlike in Pittplace, no voluntary sector managers, such as domestic violence project chairs,

attended Full Forum meetings, but co-ordinators, development workers, children's support workers et cetera did.

15) Research interviews suggest that many statutory sector middle-managers were able to tailor their work around their interest in domestic violence and attend the initiatives researched accordingly:

Researcher: "...So is membership of the Topic Group now considered to be part of your job description?..."

Interviewee "...I wonder if it would be as formal as that. I would imagine my manager sees it as part of my duties in terms of my work with domestic violence. We have quite a lot of autonomy in our work. So the fact I do a lot of work with perpetrators if I think it's appropriate to go to the Group then she supports that..."

Researcher: "...So, have much would you say membership of the Topic Group was based on your own personal interest in the problem of domestic violence?..."

Interviewee "...Both. It's about 50:50 my interest and part of my work..." (Interviewee Five).

Researcher: "...So was membership of the Topic Group part of your job description?..."

Interviewee "...Certainly it was a recognised and accepted portfolio...the responsibility for progressing [Topic Group] work would have been part of [my] post. And certainly my successor has taken it over, as well..."

Researcher: "... So, I mean, how much was your involvement in the Topic Group based on personal interest in the actual problem of domestic violence?..."

Interviewee "...I think there was an element of that. And there was certainly a strong element of that in my predecessor... to some extent, I mean, values and interests that derive from outside of work come into this as well...but domestic violence just looks to me in Pittplace, unless I'm looking at it through rose coloured glasses, to be at a very important state of taking off. And I did feel that...[it] was something I could pick up and develop fairly quickly...[also] a glaring omission in probation work is domestic violence. We see it daily...for some reason we just have not got hold of this...but your question was 'how much of a personal interest?'. Well that's some of my baggage – that I just feel bad that it's a problem that we've probably just, kind of, tended to turn our back on, we haven't done much about it...we've done very little about domestic violence..." (Interviewee Seven).

Researcher: "...How did [you get involved in the PMADVF]?..."

Interviewee: "...I think I heard about it from my colleague [name] and he said 'why don't you come along?'. And I thought, yes, I'd like to develop this role [my job] to include domestic violence as well. So I started going there and then I was asked to be on the main Topic Group for Pittplace..." (Interviewee 17).

Researcher: "...How did you get involved in the [PMADV] Forum?..."

Interviewee: "...My former colleague [name] had been very actively involved and because she was doing [it] I wasn't. But I've also, within my own service, have been very actively involved in training on domestic violence. So when she left, I mean it did originally go to somebody else because of other commitments that I had, but once that person had left it was, because it's an interest of mine and something that I thought, I've been actively involved within my own service, I sort of said I would like to be, you know, I would like to take that on and take the lead for the [Probation] Service and so that's how I became involved..." (Interviewee 15).

Researcher: "...How was it that you got involved in the [SDV] Forum?..."

Interviewee: "...That was largely because of my old job, which was Re-Housing Services Manager. So, as part of that, I was responsible for re-housing policy...how we will re-house women. And at the time...[the Forum] wanted a briefing on how, in re-

housing terms, we would deal with women who were fleeing from domestic violence. And so it seemed natural to ask me to do that. And then the [Housing Department attendee] had to drop out because she changed jobs. And I carried on [attending] because it's always been a particular interest, women's issues, of mine anyway. So I just held onto it...So it was from my central role in Re-Housing Services that I was chosen then and because I had interest..."

Researcher: "...So, membership of the Forum is not part of your job description?..."

Interviewee: "...It's not part of my job description or anybody's job description..." (Interviewee 38).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, private sector attendees did likewise:

Researcher: "...Is membership of the [SDV] Forum part of your job description?

Interviewee: "...Not at all. And, in fact, I give quite a lot of work time to it. Which I think is one reason why other solicitors aren't particularly involved with it – because you don't get the work back. And that's not really why I got involved, I've always felt that domestic violence is an important issue. And it does generate quite a lot of work for me. But I've always felt that it was an important issue. And it's something I've wanted to be involved in it. And I'm lucky that my boss is prepared to support me in that and allow me to, sort of, give this time. And in the main it is during work time. So yes, they're very supportive of that. But it's certainly not part of my job description at all. I thought it an important issue. But also important to get to know other people and know that they can phone me if they want some legal advice without any problem at all, which people do. And so, you know, people do refer people to me from time to time. But that's not primarily why I've done it..." (Interviewee 30).

Some middle-managers described themselves as 'champions':

"...It's not this sort of big I am, but I'm the only person who understands domestic violence within housing. But I think that certain issues, and domestic violence is one of them, they need a sort of champion or somebody who is going to take it seriously...I know that the Principal Officer on Housing and Advice at the moment has a real interest in developing accommodation for single people, single homeless kids, you know, young people. And that is really, really positive and that is really, really necessary work and it needs doing. But I wouldn't say that he has the same understanding in relation to domestic violence..." (Interviewee Nine).

Interviewee 38 also said:

"...I'm a champion of domestic violence within the service...".

Research observations support the suggestion in these interviews that some agencies, organizations and sections attend multi-agency domestic violence initiatives as domestic violence champions attend. Research observations highlight that Interviewee 38, the SCC housing department representative, first attended the SDVF as a 're-housing services manager' but then moved positions within the housing department, attending as an area-housing manager. Observations highlight that the re-housing services section is now a non-attendee.

Other interviewees also discussed their attendance on the initiatives researched as based on interest in domestic violence:

Researcher: "...So how did you get involved in the [PMADV] Forum?..."

Interviewee: "...Well, my previous worker here was involved. But to a lesser extent, he occasionally went to meetings. And when he left I was asked if I'd be interested. And I'm really interested in domestic violence, anyway. I'm on other committees to do with domestic violence. So I started attending then. So it basically came from my manager but I also had an interest in domestic violence..."

Subsequently:

Researcher: "...Right. So is it a requirement of your post at NCH that you have some sort of involvement with the Multi-Agency Forum or is it really based on that personal interest that you've got?..."

Interviewee: "...It's more on the personal interest. I mean we do have, part of my job description is that I'll attend meetings to represent the organization. But we tend to agree between us which we're interested in and this is really out of my own interest..." (Interviewee 16).

Only some attended the initiatives researched because they had to – police attendees appeared the most compelled:

Researcher: "...Is membership of the Topic Group part of your job description as Domestic Violence Officer?..."

Interviewee: "...Ah well possibly not. But as far as I'm concerned it comes under the heading of breaking the silence. Part of my role is to, as well as to assist obviously victims and police officers, is to break the silence and get other agencies involved. Because we realized a long time ago domestic violence isn't just a police problem. We need to encourage the participation of lots of different agencies and I see this is one way of doing that. And representing the police in a fairly good light I suppose, as far as it goes. So, yes, I suppose loosely, I feel it comes under the heading of breaking the silence and getting people talking about domestic violence..." (Interviewee Two).

Researcher: "...Is membership of the Topic Group part of your job description?..."

Interviewee: "...Yes, we've got to go...[our job description] doesn't actually say 'the Topic Group', name it as such. It's to get involved with you know any voluntary or statutory agency that has anything to do with you know domestic violence..." (Interviewee 13).

This DVO said:

"...[Attendance] is one of the key tasks identified in my job description..."

The interview continues:

Researcher: "...It's part of your job description is it, to go?..."

Interviewee: "...Oh yes, yes – not only to the Forum but to you know various other sort of meetings and things that go on..."

Researcher: "...Right. So if you were to leave your position, your successor would have to?..."

Interviewee: "...Would continue, yes. That's right..." (Interviewee 18).

A main research finding, then, is that in each initiative researched, attendance seemed as much about individual concern as agency commitment. Essentially, some attendees attended or had attended as 'enthusiasts' the initiatives researched (see, especially, Interviewee Twelve's interview). Only some agencies and organizations had one established attendee and interested individuals attended as they pleased or as they considered attendance 'appropriate', 'valuable' or 'helpful'. Some, especially middle-managers, were able to tailor their work around domestic violence and so attend the

initiatives. Others described themselves as 'champions' and yet others discussed their attendance on the initiatives researched as based on an interest in domestic violence. Finally, only a few attended the initiatives because they had to. Perhaps, attendance based on individual interest is seen most clearly in this research interview:

> Researcher: "...Who tends to attend the [Pittplace] Multi-Agency Forum?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Well [Interviewee Eleven] is usually there, [Interviewee Eleven]. And [Interviewee Eight]. [Name] sometimes comes but I haven't seen him for a while. And [Interviewee Two] or [Interviewee 18] from the police and then there are the voluntary agencies and I don't remember their names..."[91] (Interviewee 17).

Whether or not attendees themselves spotted this point is moot. Take Interviewee Four. Questioned about changing attendance in a research interview, she said:

> "...I think it's only over the last few months where I feel as though we're in a position that the Topic Group...could be called something more than beyond individual people, do you know what I mean? I think it's only just starting to happen. So when there were changes in personnel about 18 months ago I think it affected the Group massively because the nature of the Group was very dependent on those personalities...but I do think that we're just starting to get a Group that is driven by the work rather than just the personalities. But I think it's only just starting to happen...the effect was ridiculous before, you know. And so many key people went as well..." (Interviewee Four).

Yet, in a conversation in a PDVTG meeting, Interviewee Four seemed less sure that the Group was 'driven by the work rather than just the personalities':

> Interviewee Nine: "...I love coming to this group because people have worked through agency boundaries..."
>
> Interviewee Four: "...That's because we all come as individuals..." (PDVTG 9.6.00.).

16) Though attendance on each initiative researched seemed to be about individual commitment, no individuals attended *as individuals*. An associated point about attendance on these initiatives, then, is that no abused women attended meetings in the research period *as* abused women. A main research finding, therefore, is that, in the research period, the initiatives researched did not, as initiatives, talk ***with*** women who had or who were experiencing domestic violence.

17) Though no women attended the initiatives researched, ***men's*** organizations attended the PDVTG and the SDVF. A Pittplace Community and Psychological Health Care Section Perpetrators' Group representative attended the PDVTG and an Action Against Men's Violence Steelsite representative attended each SDVF Full Forum meeting.

18) The one remaining point about attendance on the initiatives researched is that attendance on the PMADVF mirrored attendance on the PDVTG – numerous agencies and organizations attending the PMADVF also attended the PDVTG. This mirroring is seen in Table 5E.

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[91] Perhaps this interviewee would have mentioned agencies rather than people had the researcher said 'which agencies attend?' rather that '*who* attends?'. However, in other interviews the researcher posed the same question and interviewees *did* discuss agencies as attendees.

TABLE 5E: *Those Agencies And Organizations Attending The PDVTG And PMADVF On At Least One Occasion Over The Research Observation Period.*

Agency/Organization	PDVTG Attendance	PMADVF Attendance
Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline	X	X
Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge	X	X
The Young Women's Project	X	X
Pittplace Community & Priority Services NHS Trust	X	X
Pittplace District General Hospital NHS Trust	X	X
Hillshire Police	X	X
Pittplace Community Safety Partnership	X	X
PMBC Housing Department	X	X
Pittplace Health Authority	X	X
Pittplace Victim Support		X
Home Valley Victim Support		X
Voluntary Housing Organization		X
Trainee Solicitor		X
Age Concern	X	
Pittplace C & P Services (Psychological Health) [1]	X	
Hillshire Probation Service	X	
PMBC Social Services Department	X	
PMBC Education Department	X	
Crown Prosecution Service	X	

[1] Though never attending the PMADVF over the research period, the Pittplace Community & Priority Services NHS Trust (Psychological Health Care Section) and Hillshire Probation Service were each on a PMADVF contact list.

Further, some *individuals* attending the PMADVF also attended the PDVTG – individuals attending the Forum from the Domestic Violence Group/Helpline; the Women and Children's Refuge; the PDGH NHS Trust; Hillshire Police; and PCSP also attended the PDVTG. Clearly, there was certain duplication of agency/organization and individual attendance in Pittplace's multi-agency domestic violence approach. Some interviewees mentioned this duplication. Discussing what the PMADVF is 'doing', this interviewee mentions that:

> "...The Topic Group is well represented at by, you know, all the agencies, voluntary and statutory, who also attend the Forum...."

The interview continues:

> Researcher: "...Do you tend to see the same people at both sets of meetings?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Yes we do, yes, because the Topic Group's got a representative from Pittplace Domestic Violence Group; a representative from the Refuge; the police et cetera.

So, the agencies that participate, you know, do so at all the events and the ones that tend not to participate don't at any..." (Interviewee 18).

Other interviewees were questioned about it:

Researcher: "...What is the nature of the relationship between [the PDVTG and the PMADVF] – is there a relationship between them?..."

Interviewee: "...Well a lot of the people on [the PMADVF] are on the Topic Group – [Interviewee Eleven] is on, [Interviewee Two] and me, and does [Interviewee Nine] come to the Forum?..."

Subsequently:

Researcher: "...But there's quite a lot of the same members on each?..."

Interviewee: "...Yes, well a few of us – [Interviewee Ten] used to attend both but I don't think her health has been up to it recently..."

Researcher: "...Is there a defined relationship between the two groups?..."

Interviewee: "...I'm not aware of any relationship, apart from you know some of us attend both..." (Interviewee 17).

Summarizing, three main research findings are seen through the researcher's observations in initiative meetings and through research interviews in Pittplace and Steelsite. First, that some agencies and organizations appeared not to see their attendance as needed on the initiatives researched or in some initiative meetings, and also appeared to see it as acceptable that just certain departments and sections attended the initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite. Secondly, in each initiative researched, attendance seemed as much about individual concern as agency commitment and, thirdly, in the research period, the initiatives researched did not, as initiatives, talk *with* women who had or who were experiencing domestic violence.

Each finding is picked up in Chapter Six since each raises issues that lead to the researcher's main conclusion. Other points about attendance on Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives raised through research observations and interviews and set out here are also picked up in Chapter Six. These points are that attendees on Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives included both specialists in domestic violence and those encountering domestic violence in much broader service provision and that some individual attendees were specialists in domestic violence but some were not, as both practitioners and managers attended. Equally, many individual attendees on the initiatives researched were specialist *multi-agency* people, as attendance on each initiative researched mirrored attendance on *other* Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives. Other points set out here and picked up in Chapter Six are that attendance on each initiative researched differed and that numerous agencies, organizations and or departments in agencies attended the Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives.

4. Discussion in the Initiatives Researched.

Here, discussions in each initiative are covered, initiative-by-initiative. As mentioned, discussions in each initiative's meetings are covered quite thoroughly here because multi-agency domestic violence initiatives' main focus appears to be their meetings. What each initiative researched did or did not talk about in these meetings is, then, particularly important.

The Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group (PDVTG).

The PDVTG discussed issues that were proposed in agendas. Five of seven PDVTG meetings in the research period had agendas. PDVTG agendas all proposed the same discussion issues. These issues tended to centre on the Group's objectives; funding; Pittplace's crime and disorder strategy; and the previous meeting's minutes, as well as AOB issues.

PDVTG agendas are contained in Table 5F, set out in Appendix I.

In each PDVTG meeting, the PDVTG Chair mentioned the agenda issues and encouraged discussion on and around each. Even in the two PDVTG meetings *without* an agenda, the Chair mentioned issues *usually* proposed in agendas and encouraged discussion on them. The PDVTG *did* usually discuss the issues proposed in agendas. In the five meetings with an agenda, just *three* issues proposed in agendas were not discussed – 'Review of Group'; 'Outstanding issues – Assessment of aims and objectives'; and 'Funding Strategies'. More, since one such issue, 'funding strategies', could not be discussed because the regional Funding Advice Bureau could not attend the meeting to discuss such strategies, really just *two* issues proposed in agendas, the 'review' of the Group and the 'assessment' of its aims, were not discussed. In the two meetings without an agenda, each issue on and around which the Chair encouraged discussion was discussed.

Nonetheless, the PDVTG *did* digress more in these two meetings without an agenda. Here, as well as issues on and around which the Chair encouraged discussion, further issues were discussed. So, in one such meeting (January 1999), the Group had an extensive discussion about domestic violence perpetrators; how domestic violence is recorded, especially how domestic violence is recorded in A & E departments; and whether the Group/Helpline and the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge should 'merge'.

Because PDVTG discussions were faithful to Group agendas, the issues discussed were:

PDVTG Objectives.

Much PDVTG discussion centred on the Group's objectives. Each agenda in the research period proposed discussion on the PDVTG's objectives and these objectives were discussed in each meeting. Discussion on PDVTG objectives commanded much time, sometimes *most* time, in all but one meeting. Interestingly, agendas proposed discussion on and the Group discussed[92] each objective, *whether or not* the objective was not progressing, progressing slowly, progressing well or was achieved. Associated points are that, sometimes, the Group had the same discussion on the same objective in different meetings and numerous PDVTG discussions centred on an undertaking to 'chase up' progress on an objective[93].

These issues are clearly seen in PDVTG discussion on one objective – the training objective[94]. This discussion is set out in Appendix J.

So, much PDVTG discussion centred on the Group's objectives. Each agenda proposed discussion on these objectives and they were discussed thoroughly in each meeting. Also, agendas proposed discussion on, and the Group discussed, each objective, whether or not the objective was progressing or was achieved. Finally, time and time again, the Group had the same discussions about its objectives and numerous discussions centred on a decision to 'chase up' progress. Essentially, the Group seemed unable or unwilling to move beyond discussing its objectives.

Yet, PDVTG agendas proposed other standard issues that the PDVTG then discussed, one being funding.

Funding.

Three of five agendas in the research observation period proposed discussion on funding issues and, on numerous occasions, the PDVTG discussed funding, such as Hillshire Police's Community Initiatives Programme (CIP) and the Home Office's Crime Reduction Programme (CRP). The Group discussed the CIP more, although just three of the five "...domestic violence related projects..." (PDVTG Minutes 2.9.99.) in

[92] And, incidentally, the minutes then minuted.
[93] Similarly, PDVTG minutes repeatedly declared that an objective was 'achieved' or that an objective "...would be placed as a priority for the new development worker..." (PDVTG Minutes 4.11.99.).
[94] Objective Two – "...To undertake an audit of training skills in the area of domestic violence amongst members of the Topic Group and other local agencies, and to develop proposals for multi-agency and community training...".

Pittplace that bidded to the CIP were PDVTG attendees[95]. So, discussing AOB issues[96], in May 1999 the Chair reminded attendees that the deadline to bid to the CIP was approaching; in September 1999 a PCSP representative discussed bids to the CIP made by organizations in Pittplace; and in July 2000, Group attendees (the Chair and the Group/Helpline; Refuge; and PMBC Social Service Department representatives) discussed those bids.

The PDVTG discussed the CRP just once, March 2000. This discussion, though, was most interesting. Here, the Chair explained that the Hillshire Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Working Group had proposed that, throughout Hillshire, just one CRP bid should be made and that the SDVF should make this bid. PDVTG attendees were unhappy that this proposal had not been disclosed to the remaining multi-agency initiatives in Hillshire. More, the proposal that just Steelsite bid was seen to be "...how we always lose out..." (PDVTG 30.3.00.). PDVTG attendees' unhappiness was compounded when the Chair explained that a Hillshire Group organized meeting was being held that afternoon where the proposed SDVF bid would be planned. Attendees then had a long discussion about how the Chair had been told of this meeting just that morning; how the meeting could be held without the PDVTG being told and/or invited; and how (and indeed whether) the PDVTG is represented on the Hillshire Group. In the meeting, the PCSP representative telephoned the Community Safety Team in Steelsite and encouraged the researcher to say whether she knew that just one Steelsite bid was proposed, though the PDVTG did not find out whether this was, indeed, proposed. Nonetheless, attendees were undivided in believing that the PDVTG should (be allowed to) bid – "...we should fight our own corner..." (PDVTG 30.3.00.).

This discussion was interesting since the PDVTG had clearly sought to 'protect its own turf' here. Perhaps, then, this is the 'competition' that Liddle and Gelsthorpe (1994b) discuss around multi-agency crime prevention. Perhaps, also, it is the process that Blagg and colleagues (1998) discuss as initiatives on certain issues become 'bigger' than the issue and become 'ends in themselves'.

Pittplace's Crime and Disorder Strategy.

Three of five agendas in the research period proposed discussion on Pittplace's Crime and Disorder Strategy and the PDVTG discussed this strategy in most meetings. The

[95] The two other bids were made by the Young Women's Project and the Pittplace Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Helpline – just the former attended the Topic Group (though just once) over the research observation period.
[96] See below.

March 1999 agenda timetabled a presentation by the PCSP Director on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – the presentation lasted much of the meeting. The PDVTG then discussed the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions as an AOB issue[97] in the May 1999 meeting – the Chair and the PCSP Director wondered whether a 'workshop' to examine Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions on domestic violence was needed – and as a main meeting issue in September 1999 – here, discussion centred on the Chair and the Group/Helpline and PCSP attendees. Also, the Group held a 'Crime and Disorder Strategy Workshop' in June 1999. Here, the PCSP Director gave another presentation on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions.

The Group did not, though, discuss the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in July 2000, even though the Chair expressed concern here that Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions on domestic violence existed alongside the original PDVTG objectives and said that "...I'd like to have a discussion about that..." (PDVTG 13.7.00.). On other occasions the PDVTG avoided discussion on 'difficult' issues. As mentioned, it did not discuss two agenda issues – 'Review of Group' and 'Outstanding issues – Assessment of aims and objectives'. This seemed no coincidence. Clearly, each issue not discussed was challenging and potentially much *more* challenging than most other issues discussed in the PDVTG. Very much, the PDVTG appeared to be 'playing it safe' in not discussing them. Certainly, a 'review of the Group' or a discussion about the Group's objectives could raise issues that some might rather not hear. Again, was the PDVTG becoming 'an end in itself' here?

So, the PDVTG discussed Pittplace's Crime and Disorder Strategy but did not discuss this strategy and the Group's objectives in July 2000. This was not, though, the only time that attendees avoided discussion on 'difficult issues'. Perhaps, the PDVTG was becoming an 'end in itself'.

AOB Issues.

AOB issues were proposed in each agenda in the research period but were discussed in just some meetings. No AOB issues were discussed in December 1998 or in March 1999, though the March meeting ended as the Women and Children's Refuge representative discussed a training programme between the refuge and a Pittplace college. The March 1999 minutes included this discussion as an AOB issue.

[97] Again, see below.

Interestingly, the minutes also included a point about Paul Boateng intending to visit Pittplace, though the Group did not discuss this point in the meeting, as an AOB issue or otherwise.

Three AOB issues were discussed in May 1999. First, the 'PADS initiative'. Through CIP funding, a Pittplace drama organization – the Performing Arts Development Service (PADS) – intended to devise, develop, pilot, and present to all 'year 10' children in Pittplace a drama based domestic violence awareness initiative. A PADS representative attended the December 1998 meeting and explained the proposed initiative – attendees discussed whether and how the PDVTG could be involved in it here, and again in March 1999. In May 1999, the PDVTG discussed the PADS initiative as an AOB issue. The Group then discussed it in the main meeting in September 1999. A second AOB issue was discussed in May 1999 – a DVO reported that the government had changed the definition of domestic violence. Attendees expressed disapproval of this changed definition and then discussed government policy on domestic violence. Also, under AOB issues, the Chair reminded attendees that the deadline to bid to the CIP was approaching. Finally, attendees discussed the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. May 1999 minutes included three AOB issues, the domestic violence definition; the CIP; and a point about Paul Boateng intending to visit Pittplace, though, again, the Group did not discuss this point in the meeting, as an AOB issue or otherwise. The minutes missed two AOB issues, the PADS initiative and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Three AOB issues were discussed in September 1999. First, a PCSP representative discussed bids to the CIP made by organizations in Pittplace, since it was "...an important issue..." (PDVTG 2.9.99.) that Pittplace agencies knew of all CIP bids submitted. Secondly, the Group engaged in a long discussion about teenage pregnancy and its issues. Thirdly, an attendee reported on progress made by a voluntary sector representative on a PDVTG objective. Oddly, the September minutes did not set out the AOB issues discussed in the meeting and set out instead the "...general concern [which] was raised [in the meeting] regarding the attendance at the Group..." (PDVTG Minutes 2.9.99.). Concern had been raised in September 1999, but not as an AOB issue.

One AOB issue was discussed in January 2000 – service provision. The Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline representative reported that the Group/Helpline had secured funding for a 'crèche' and a 'drop-in-centre'. The Chair then wondered whether the Group/Helpline and the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge should

'merge'. Attendees discussed such a merger – whether those organizations would be prepared to merge and whether such a merger would be favoured by volunteers. Whether such a merger would affect services to women and children was not examined though. Whether there was a need to examine "...who's doing what..." (PDVTG 20.1.00.) in service provision to women and children in Pittplace was then discussed. Again, the minutes did not include this issue as an AOB issue, instead including as an AOB issue the long discussion about domestic violence recording procedures.

No AOB issues were discussed in March 2000, but four were discussed in July 2000. First, attendees discussed how some organizations did not attend the PDVTG. Secondly, the Group discussed whether attendees understood which voluntary sector organizations in Pittplace provided which services to women and children. Thirdly, the Chair reported that some attendees were to be involved in a 'Public Protection Scrutiny Commission' in Pittplace. Fourthly, attendees discussed how the Hospital Trust's Child Protection Manager/Project Midwife attendee was to undertake an audit of domestic violence in pregnant women. Just the third and fourth issues here were minuted as AOB issues.

Clearly, then, an issue discussed as an AOB issue in one meeting could be discussed in the main meeting (that is, not as an AOB issue) in another meeting. Also, the Group sometimes discussed as AOB issues, issues normally discussed in the main meeting as standard agenda issues – most obviously, the Group's objectives, funding and Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions. Also PDVTG minutes sometimes appeared uncertain about whether issues were main meeting issues or AOB issues, as numerous issues discussed in the main meeting or during some other discussion were minuted as AOB issues. Finally, the minutes appeared uncertain whether some AOB issues should be minuted *at all*. Many issues raised as AOB were just not minuted. Perhaps, then, the PDVTG was unsure about the *role* that AOB issues could and should assume in their discussions and about whether and how AOB issues fitted around the standard issues discussed.

Whatever, AOB issues discussed in the PDVTG seemed to centre on three broad topics – policy; attending agencies and organizations; and service provision. Interestingly, one could also put the other issues discussed in the PDVTG (essentially, those issues that were not the Group's objectives, funding or Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions) under these three broad headings.

Policy.

As well as the May 1999 AOB discussion about government policy on domestic violence, other policy issues were discussed. Discussing the previous meeting's minutes in September 1999, the Chair reported that Paul Boateng intended to visit Pittplace – she suggested that the PDVTG "...decide..." (PDVTG 2.9.99.) how to express disapproval of the new domestic violence definition. Also in September 1999, the PDVTG discussed the Living Without Fear Document (Women's Unit 1998). In March 2000, a DVO discussed the new Hillshire Police domestic violence policy. Attendees then had a long discussion about this policy.

Attendees.

As seen, attending agencies and organizations' domestic violence recording procedures and training on domestic violence were discussed (January 2000). Additionally, attendees discussed their 'outside activities' – in January 1999, the Child Protection Manager/Project Midwife representing the Hospital Trust discussed a domestic violence conference she was organizing.

The Group also discussed *non-attendees'* activities. As seen, the PDVTG discussed the PADS initiative in December 1998, March 1999, May 1999 and September 1999. Attendees also discussed a local university college's counselling course, especially its need for counselling placements in the voluntary sector, in March 1999.

Service Provision.

The PDVTG discussed service provision throughout the research period.

In March 1999, the Chair of the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge Committee, a retired GP, gave a presentation on Primary Care Groups (PCGs) and HAZs and attendees discussed health care. In December 1998, the CPS attendee discussed the CPS' service provision and in March 1999, and again in May 1999, the Group discussed criminal justice and domestic violence issues.

Other discussion on service provision focused on increased GP referrals to the Psychological Health Care Service perpetrators' group (May 1999) and GP responses to domestic violence (September 1999).

So, much discussion about service provision centred on information giving and sharing. Nonetheless, the Group did not match this extensive information *giving* on service provision with extensive *examination of* service provision. The examination of the

Psychological Health Care perpetrators' group – here attendees examined the information with reference to real cases – was unusual. Usually, even when information on services was given, the PDVTG neither examined how attendees experience service provision nor explored how services and service provision could be and should be developed.

Readers might remember that attendees' January 2000 discussions about a possible Group/Helpline and Refuge 'merger' centred on whether a merger would be favoured by volunteers *not* on whether such a merger would affect services to women and children. Likewise, their discussions in the same meeting about 'who's doing what' centred on whether there was *a need to* examine service provision, rather than on such an examination. Why the PDVTG did not just 'look at things' there and then – why it needed to plan to do it – seemed odd. Further, even when information on services was given, the PDVTG declined examination of how *women and children* experience services and service provision.

The PDVTG also declined examination of how women and children experience *domestic violence* – it did not discuss domestic violence. Oddly, the Group spent more time discussing the issue of teenage pregnancy (September 1999) than it did discussing the issue of domestic violence! After sharing information about GP referrals to the perpetrators' group (May 1999), attendees did mention that domestic violence is a mental health issue but immediately reverted to discussing the PDVTG objective on health (Objective Six).

This appeared to be the point. Throughout the research period, it seemed that issues like domestic violence service provision and *the issue of domestic violence* were marginalized as, time and again, PDVTG discussion reverted to the Group's objectives or the other same, standard issues set out here.

What might explain why discussion reverted to these standard issues? Perhaps, the PDVTG was undecided and uncertain what else it could or should discuss. Our earlier points about AOB issues in PDVTG discussions support this possibility since these points suggest uncertainty about the role that broader issues could assume in their discussions. On why discussion reverted to the Group's objectives, perhaps attendees thought it was more 'appropriate' to discuss these objectives. Certainly, though the long discussion about perpetrators (January 2000) seemed to arouse interest, the Chair's comment in closing it was that the issue of perpetrator was excluded from Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions on domestic violence. Did the Chair think this long

discussion was 'appropriate' since it connected with the PDVTG's objectives or Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions? Did she think this discussion *needed* connection with these objectives/provisions to be 'appropriate' discussion?

Again, on why discussion reverted to the Group's objectives, perhaps attendees thought that 'why they were there' was to discuss these objectives or, possibly, *was those objectives*. Some attendees clearly did not think this:

> Researcher: "...What do you see as being the main objectives of [the Topic] Group?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...To provide Pittplace with an excellent all round provision for women and children fleeing from domestic violence...that we can provide an all round quality service..." (Interviewee Eight).
>
> Interviewee: "...Well firstly there's the needs of victims of domestic violence and doing the best for them from all the different angles, we're coming from different directions aiming for the same goal. The second one that I find very useful is the actual networking, knowing who's who and what they can bring so that if you get stuck you know who to turn to. And then the third thing I think is the information, dissemination of information – that is very valuable too. And those I see as the main aims of the Topic Group. Getting things done is probably the final one..." (Interview Ten).
>
> Interviewee: "...To raise the profile of domestic violence and to get it put on everybody's agendas..." (Interviewee Eleven).

Other attendees, though, said:

> Researcher: "...What do you see as being the main objectives of [the Topic] Group?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...As I see it, the *purpose of the Group* is to take forward the strategy that was done before the Group was set up and to make progress on the tasks that were set out..." (Interviewee 12. Italics Supplied)[98].
>
> Interviewee: "...Right, well we've got, have you got a copy of this? Yes the objectives – there's about seven major ones that were discussed and agreed when we first set out at the Topic Group..." (Interviewee 16).
>
> Interviewee: "...Oh, there's a load really. But, you know, hoping to make a difference in Pittplace...Yes, I was reaching for a file because there's quite a few objectives set out for the Topic Group..." (Interviewee 17).

Before examining discussions in the other Pittplace initiative, PDVTG minutes might be covered. These minutes are interesting since they were much less faithful to Group discussions than Group discussions were to agendas. Indeed, on numerous occasions discussion *not* observed in PDVTG meetings was minuted. An issue minuted and unobserved three times was that Paul Boateng had expressed interest in launching a Green Paper on Domestic Violence in Pittplace. On other occasions PDVTG discussion, though observed, was not minuted. Certainly, though long and interesting, the March 2000 discussion on the Home Office CRP was minuted as "...the outcome of the discussion was that if possible that (sic) Pittplace would submit an individual bid to progress the work of the Topic Group..." (PDVTG Minutes 30.3.00.). Attendees' proposals that, inter alia, "...we should fight our own corner..." (PDVTG 30.3.00.) were not minuted. Essentially, PDVTG minutes stressed some issues but rather avoided

[98] This 'strategy' is the report, 'Home is Where the Hurt Is', produced in September 1996.

others, covering issues that reflected well on the PDVTG but not those that reflected badly.

This selective minuting is important both because it mirrors the PDVTG's avoidance of difficult issues in its discussions and because it suggests that the PDVTG was again becoming an end in itself here. Further, and associated, the selective minuting suggests that the Group could be more concerned with what it *says* it is doing, rather than what it *is doing*. As seen in Chapter Two, the literature suggests that what agencies *say* they do in service provision on domestic violence is sometimes very different from what they *do do*. Perhaps this difference between saying and doing is seen in multi-agency approaches to domestic violence too.

The Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum (PMADVF).

PMADVF meetings had no agendas. The Chair tried to determine and direct discussion in the PMADVF through proposing certain issues to be discussed but, time and again, in PMADVF meetings discussion wandered. Sometimes, it appeared that attendees were discussing those issues that came to mind as attendees discussed numerous, assorted and sometimes unconnected issues. Much discussion in some meetings was no more than 'chatting'. These points are seen in the April 2000 meeting. Discussions here are set out in Appendix K.

So, it appeared that, sometimes, attendees were discussing those issues that came to mind. One interviewee mentioned this too. Questioned about the 'aims' of the PMADVF, Interviewee Eight said:

> "...I think that could be well improved...I mean, it's good, but, like, we didn't seem to know what we were talking about this week [April 1999] did we between you and me, you know what I mean there didn't seem to be any format or agenda to it...".

It did seem, though, that discussion in PMADVF meetings centred on certain issues.

Domestic Violence.

One issue discussed was domestic violence. No discernible common understanding of domestic violence appeared to underpin the PMADVF's discussions. Rather, attendees discussed their opinions and philosophies on domestic violence throughout the research period – whether domestic violence is normalized in Pittplace; that domestic violence is grounded in control; whether normalization of domestic violence in Pittplace is based on Pittplace's mining background; that a main issue is "...how to get boys to talk about their feelings..."; and that "...it's about breaking the loop..." (PMADVF 19.7.00.).

Some discussion on domestic violence in the PMADVF was somewhat unsophisticated. Certainly, in January 2000, the Women and Children's Refuge representative discussed domestic violence and women with mental health issues, persistently expressing the opinion that women "...with not everything up there..." (PMADVF 11.1.00.) cannot make choices on their circumstances. Clearly, this suggestion was insensitive and rested on the dangerous assumption that women facing domestic violence *without* mental health issues have automatic choices on their circumstances[99]. In a research interview, the Refuge representative also voiced opinions about domestic violence that some might see as questionable. One opinion – that some women in the Refuge do not 'keep their children under control' – seemed, more than most, such an opinion. Interestingly, though, the Refuge representative's January 2000 suggestion about women 'with not everything up there' did not cause the consternation in the PMADVF that it might have. Indeed, although no common understanding about domestic violence appeared to have been reached, in discussing domestic violence PMADVF attendees had the same opinions and usually agreed.

The PMADVF rarely discussed domestic violence and children. When it did discuss children, discussion centred on children as potential *perpetrators* not as victims of domestic violence. So, in April 1999, the Women and Children's Refuge representative said that violence and abuse must be "... nipp[ed] in the bud..." (PMADVF 7.4.99.). Others had the same opinion –"...you can see it in them at infant school who will become criminals..." (PMADVF 7.4.99.). A social services representative alone mentioned how children *experience* domestic violence – this representative discussed child protection issues. Likewise, just one comment in July 2000 covered children as victims – an attendee wondered "...what happens to the children in all of this?..." (PMADVF 19.7.00.). Other attendees responded, but moved immediately to discussing social services' responses.

Indeed, much PMADVF discussion centred on domestic violence service provision.

Domestic Violence Service Provision.

The PMADVF discussed Pittplace agencies/organizations' service provision on domestic violence in most meetings – it also received a presentation on Hillshire Police's domestic violence services in one meeting, January 2000. A Hillshire Police

[99] Indeed we discussed above in Chapter Two that the refuge movement has never assumed that some women have, and other women have no, automatic choices and has, instead, been grounded in the thinking that *all* women should be empowered to determine *their* own lives and develop the resources to make decisions about *their* circumstances.

Divisional Commander[100] gave this presentation. Afterwards, attendees put questions to the Divisional Commander. PMADVF attendees expressed little concern about police service provision in January 2000, but were clearly concerned in other meetings. In October 1999, a DVO discussed the differences between the policy commitment to domestic violence expressed in the Pittplace Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) and through crime and disorder provisions on domestic violence and the problems DVOs in Pittplace face. She said that, although the Hillshire Police Chief Constable expresses commitment to domestic violence and "...goes to all these meetings..." (PMADVF 6.10.99.), she is overworked; her work is marginalized in the police and is dismissed as 'not real police work'; and DVO responses to domestic violence are sometimes poor. Also, in July 2000, the PMADVF had a long discussion about policing domestic violence, including the problems remaining in how 'bobbies' police domestic violence and that 'it's just a domestic' thinking remains in the police.

The PMADVF also discussed other service provision, especially health services and Victim Support's responses. Discussing voluntary organizations' service provision, the PMADVF sometimes mentioned funding issues.

Funding.

Indeed funding was talked about throughout the research period. As seen[101], funding was especially discussed in the April 2000 meeting. Here, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline representative (the PMADVF Chair) and the Women and Children's Refuge representative discussed the Home Office's CRP; the Chair told other attendees about some European funding that she had found; the Chair and the Refuge representative discussed the Group/Helpline's National Lottery bid; and the PDGH Trust representative discussed a local funding body.

The focus, seen here, on the Group/Helpline and the Refuge representatives was quite normal in PMADVF meetings. Essentially, these domestic violence organization representatives seemed the ones in the know about funding and, further, the ones in the frame as funding was discussed. Interestingly, the focus, seen here, on these representatives is slightly narrower to the focus seen in PDVTG meetings. Readers might remember that, there, as well as the Group/Helpline and Refuge representatives,

[100] There are two Hillshire Police divisions in Pittplace – each have a Chief Superintendent as Divisional Commander.
[101] See Appendix K.

the PMBC Housing Department representative (the PDVTG Chair) and PCSP representatives were also in the frame as funding was discussed.

So, funding was talked about in the PMADVF throughout the research period. Normally, discussion on funding centred on domestic violence organization representatives. This focus was slightly narrower to that in PDVTG meetings – there discussion on funding also centred on the PMBC Housing Department representative and PCSP representatives.

Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Approaches.

The PMADVF mentioned the issue of 'partnership' on numerous occasions over the research period. Attendees seemed keen to discuss liaison. In April 2000, the Chair asked attendees what they wanted to cover in the next meeting – the Refuge representative suggested "...something on partnership working..." (PMADVF 19.4.00.). In May 2000, the Chair proposed that three issues be covered in the meeting – one was "...partnership working and the way forward..." (PMADVF 19.7.00.). Indeed, attendees seemed keen *on liaison*.

Though mentioned time and again, multi-agency approaches were not problematized in the PMADVF. So, in April 1999, attendees discussed their need for knowledge on other people; organizations; and agencies involved in service provision on domestic violence in Pittplace – a Health representative said she planned to develop a directory of people involved in such provision. Attendees did not though, discuss whether and how their knowledge (or gaps in their knowledge) on and around domestic violence might be affected by Pittplace's multi-agency domestic violence approaches – no attendee made the link between their partnership needs and working outside the PMADVF and the Forum itself. Finally, the PMADVF mentioned the PDVTG numerous times in the research period but did not once explain or examine the links between the two.

Perhaps, this issue is best seen in the PMADVF's January 2000 discussions. Here, a DVO expressed concern about 'working together'. She suggested that "...groups..." in Pittplace needed "...to work out..." what they were all doing on domestic violence and "...what the future held..." (PMADVF 11.1.00.). The Chair dismissed this suggestion, saying that the new PDVTG co-ordinator would do that[102]. But the DVO continued to

[102] 'The new co-ordinator' was a HAZ funded worker, appointed as per PDVTG Objective Six (see below, Outputs).

express concern that the "...group was stagnating..." (PMADVF 11.1.00.)[103]. The Divisional Commander attending the meeting then wondered whether the PMADVF had "...any input..." (PMADVF 11.1.00.) into the other Pittplace initiative, the PDVTG. The Women and Children's Refuge representative explained that the PDVTG is chaired by a housing services representative and is usually convened on Thursday afternoons. None could summon further explanation about the distinctions between the PMADVF and the PDVTG.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Finally, PMADVF discussion centred on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – two PMADVF meetings over the research period were given to crime and disorder provisions and the PCSP. In April 1999, a video about the Crime and Disorder Act lasted much of the meeting and in October 1999 the PCSP Director attended the Forum to explain the Act – this explanation was interesting, on three grounds. First, she clearly understood, and sought to encourage the PMADVF to understand, that seniority was 'good'. Throughout her explanation she created the impression that 'things could only get better' now "...ludicrously senior..." people were involved in Pittplace's crime and disorder issues and now there were "...clear mechanisms to make sure senior people own this work..." (PMADVF 6.10.99.). The Partnership Director's explanation seemed to suggest, also, that she understood that seniority was 'power' – within her explanation she discussed how this ludicrously senior partnership was a "...powerful tool..." (PMADVF 6.10.99.).

Secondly, she seemed to see, and, again, sought to encourage the Forum to see, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as a panacea. She responded to the DVO's concerns about police responses to domestic violence[104] by saying "...the police have signed up, so we're going to have to use it..." (PMADVF 6.10.99.). The police having 'signed up' seemed to be 'the answer' to these concerns – the 'right' solutions to these and, one assumes, most other problems.

The Partnership Director's suggestion here that the 'right solutions' in domestic violence were crime and disorder solutions is perhaps unsurprising. Readers might remember that domestic violence is one of twelve issues covered in Pittplace's Crime and Disorder Strategy and the PDVTG's eight original objectives have been subsumed

[103] Interestingly, the DVO used the word 'group' here – this confused some. Certainly, the Women and Children's Refuge representative questioned the DVO's concerns, saying that the Refuge was developing well. The Chair was less confused, and made clear that the DVO was discussing the PMADVF, *not* the Refuge or Pittplace Group/Helpline.

[104] Discussed above.

within the Strategy's action plan on domestic violence[105]. The message in both moves is clearly that, in Pittplace, domestic violence is a crime and disorder problem. This message was heard throughout the research period. Interestingly, much information set out in Chapter Three about domestic violence in Pittplace could only be accessed through a crime and disorder route. Certainly, *most* information about the extent of domestic violence in Pittplace could only be obtained from Pittplace's Crime And Disorder Audit[106]. In general, it seemed that the main access point to information about domestic violence in Pittplace was a crime and disorder environment but in Steelsite the main access to such information was the multi-agency initiative. Clearly, messages presented around domestic violence will differ according to the environments in which information can be accessed. By positioning access to details about domestic violence in a crime and disorder environment, the message is that, in Pittplace, domestic violence is a crime and disorder concern. Domestic violence having been defined as a crime and disorder problem, it is perhaps unsurprising that the Partnership Director suggested a second message – that solutions on domestic violence are crime and disorder ones.

Thirdly, she sought, throughout, to create feelings of inclusion; joint interest in; and ownership of service provision on domestic violence and, especially, of crime and disorder provisions on domestic violence. As well as emphasizing that "...everybody is a player..." in crime and disorder provisions, the Partnership Director used inclusive pronouns, 'we're' and 'us'. She did not, though, expand on this 'we' or 'us'. Further, explaining Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions and the PCSP, she used the ambiguous pronoun 'it' – 'it' could be discussed with 'no previous experience required' of crime and disorder provisions or the PCSP. The Director also said that the PMADVF should "...use..." the PCSP and, more, that Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions on domestic violence were "...contributed by everybody..." – "...on domestic violence, it's been written by you..." (PMADVF 6.10.99.). She did not, though, explain why and how the PMADVF should or could use the PCSP or expanded on her assertion that those provisions were contributed by everybody. Possibly, this is the process of incorporation that Adam Crawford (1994a) discusses in multi-agency crime prevention? Regardless, the Partnership Director's inclusive discourse was interesting because it seemed so associated with a main issue in Pittplace – the duplication between the Pittplace PDVTG and the Pittplace Forum.

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[105] See discussion above about the Initiatives' aims and objectives.

[106] Most information about the possible extent of domestic violence in Steelsite could be obtained from the SDVF.

Duplication In Pittplace.

Duplication in attendance between the PDVTG and Forum has been examined earlier but, as attendance in one Pittplace initiative mirrored attendance in the other, so discussions in one initiative mirrored discussions in the other. Indeed, many same discussions were held in these Pittplace initiatives.

So, a main issue in Pittplace was the duplication in attendance and discussions between the Pittplace Topic Group and the Pittplace Forum. This duplication suggests that the distinctions between the Pittplace Topic Group and the Pittplace Forum were not clear. Not only was the competition that Liddle and Gelsthorpe (1994b) discuss seen in Pittplace and Steelsite but the 'confusion' and 'duplication' that these researchers discuss was also seen. Some research interviews also raise this suggestion.

Some Pittplace multi-agency attendees *did* distinguish Pittplace's multi-agency initiatives. Questioned on the PMADVF's objectives, one interviewee said that:

> "...I think the major aim of it, really, is networking, more than anything. And sort of keeping us abreast of any major developments in the field of domestic violence through, you know, inviting...speakers. So they seem to be the major aims of it...Yes, I think they're sort of the major aims of the Forum. As far as getting things progressed, [that] lies more with the Topic Group, which was involved, is involved in the action plan for the Crime and Disorder Act and all that sort of stuff. So, the quarterly Forum's more of an informal gathering of, you know, people just exchange ideas, where their agency's at, and just so that we can put faces to names more than anything..." (Interviewee 18).

Questioned on distinguishing the PDVTG and the PMADVF, another interviewee said:

> "...I see the Forum as a way for everybody to stick their oar in really and not be working to any particular agenda. I see it as a much more informal thing where you can discuss issues rather than have to go through the structured agenda of the Topic Group..." (Interviewee 17).

Likewise, a PDVTG interviewee said:

> "...The Forum isn't so structured, isn't so motivated, doesn't achieve so much. It's more just an update on the issue..." (Interviewee Ten).

But other interviewees were less discerning. There was a suspicion that more than one PMADVF attendee discussed the PDVTG rather than the PMADVF in research interviews. Asked how often she attended Forum meetings, Interviewee 15 discussed the 'bits of Forum work' that she was doing in between meetings. She seemed, though, to describe work under a *Topic Group* objective rather than work associated with the Forum. Further, Interviewee 15 seemed uncertain as the PDVTG was mentioned:

> Researcher: "...Have you ever had any involvement with the Community Safety Partnership Domestic Violence Topic Group, which is chaired by [Interviewee Nine]?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Yes..."
>
> Researcher: "...Right, how often have you been to that Group?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Similar sort of, to the other one with that one, yes. I mean I think that's part of the problem – that there are a number of groups and it's about how they overlap and which ones you go to...".

Likewise, some PDVTG attendees were puzzled in research interviews:

> Researcher: "...Do you go to the Forum as well or not?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Is that the one that? I mean this sounds awful but there's that many with that many names. Is it the one that meets quarterly down at the? No, it's not that one is it?..." (Interviewee 13).

Further, one research interviewee conflated the PDVTG, the PMADVF *and* the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline and appeared to discuss a fictional organization. The interviewee believed that the PMADVF is minuted – no minutes were taken – and that it planned the Performing Arts Development Service (PADS) drama initiative – as seen, the PDVTG supported PADS. Further, the interviewee believed that the PMADVF's main aims were "...obviously to support anybody that has been a victim of domestic violence...whether it be male or female..." (Interviewee 19). The Forum did not engage in such supportive service provision.

Some Pittplace interviewees noticed that the distinctions between the Pittplace Topic Group and Forum were not seen. In describing how the PDVTG had developed, the PCSP Director said:

> "...there is confusion, you know. I mean that concerns me a little bit – that there's confusion over the nature of the groups. You know, what is the Domestic Violence Topic Group, what is the Domestic Violence Forum?..." (Interviewee Four).

Yet, both the PDVTG and the PMADVF seemed reluctant to tackle this confusion. In the September 1999 PDVTG meeting, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline representative expressed concern about confusion around Pittplace's domestic violence organizations. The PDVTG Chair dismissed these concerns, saying that the PDVTG bid to the HAZ (the issue under discussion as the Group/Helpline representative expressed concern) "...was not confusing..." (PDVTG 02.09.99.).

Likewise, in January 2000, PMADVF discussion centred on a DVO argument that 'groups' in Pittplace needed 'to work out' what they were doing. But the PMADVF Chair dismissed the DVO's argument, saying that the new PDVTG co-ordinator would do that. Additionally, in the January 2000 PDVTG meeting, the DVO repeated her January 2000 PMADVF arguments. Here, the DVO seemed concerned about duplication in Pittplace's *multi-agency* approaches but January 2000 PDVTG discussion ended up being about whether there was a need to examine 'who's doing what' in *service provision*.

It is interesting that the PMADVF Chair dismissed the DVO's concerns on duplication in January 2000. This Chair is the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline representative on the PDVTG. The PDVTG Chair dismissed the concerns *this*

representative raised on duplication in September 1999. Possibly the PMADVF Chair dismissed these concerns since she believed the DVO had criticized the PMADVF, an organization one PDVTG/PMADVF attendee dubbed the Chair's "...baby..." (Interviewee Eight). Again, do we see an initiative becoming an 'end in itself'? Whatever, the PDVTG and PMADVF Chairs' dismissals reflect a reluctance to tackle confusion in Pittplace's multi-agency domestic violence approaches. The Partnership Director's inclusive discourse in October 1999 was interesting because it seemed associated with the reluctance to tackle confusion and duplication in Pittplace – possibly, it *amplified* this confusion and duplication.

The Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum (SDVF) Full Forum.

Most discussion in Full Forum meetings was prescribed. Each Full Forum meeting had an agenda. The agendas were long and proposed numerous issues for discussion – some agendas even prescribed AOB issues. Most agendas can be found in Appendix L – one can be found as an illustration in Figure 5A[107].

SDVF Full Forum agendas typically prescribed the same issues for discussion – these were the Forum's Multi-Agency Strategy on Domestic Abuse; the NLCB Voluntary Sector Development Project; joint Forum/Steelsite University research; the Forum's sub-groups; funding issues, as well as 'information sharing' and AOB issues.

Clearly, most prescribed issues centred on the Forum's *outputs*. Most agendas also timetabled one or more presentations into Full Forum meetings. The Full Forum then discussed these standard issues. As in the PDVTG, the Forum discussed the standard issues in like manner over the research period. The Chair and/or co-ordinator/development worker[108] mentioned, usually in succession, each prescribed issue. Usually, the co-ordinator/development worker then discussed each issue and sometimes attendees (mostly the same ones) then discussed that issue. This approach is seen the July 2000 meeting. Discussion here is set out in Appendix M.

When and how did the Full Forum discuss the standard agenda issues?

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[107] Sadly, we cannot discuss the June 1999 Full SDVF with reference to the meeting's agenda. The June meeting was the first meeting of the SDVF the researcher observed and, since the researcher was unaware then that agendas were obtainable as the meeting commenced, she failed to obtain an agenda. As the SDVF does not keep previous agendas, research documentation does not extend to the June 1999 Full SDVF agenda.

[108] In the June 1999 and September 1999 meetings the SDVF had a co-ordinator. This person had become the development worker by the January 2000 meeting. Whether as co-ordinator or development worker, this person assumed a similar role within Full SDVF meetings.

FIGURE 5A: *Figure Showing An Illustration SDVF Agenda.*

"...FULL FORUM MEETING
20th July 1999
9.30 – 11.30am

AGENDA

- Introductions
- MAIN ITEMS:
- Presentation by [name] from Social Services, about the new framework for the Assessment of Children in Need
- [name] from Area Child Protection Committee, about recommendations from the recent Part 8 Review into child death
- QUICK REPORTS
  - Launch of the Multi-Agency Strategy on Domestic Abuse / shared definition of domestic abuse / media coverage
  - NLCB Voluntary Sector Development Project
  - Training Sub-group
  - Children & Young People Sub-group
  - Work with Perpetrators & Civil & Criminal Justice Sub-group
- Funding
  - Crime Reduction Programme bid
  - Community Initiatives Programme
  - Gamma D.V. Project funding crisis
- Other information sharing by members
- A.O.B & future meetings..." (SDVF Agenda 20.7.00.).

The Multi-Agency Strategy on Domestic Abuse.

Each agenda proposed discussion on the SDVF's Multi-Agency Strategy on Domestic Abuse and the SDVF mentioned and/or discussed the strategy in each Full Forum meeting in the research period.

The NLCB Voluntary Sector Development Project.

Each agenda proposed discussion on the NLCB funded Voluntary Sector Development Project – the SDVF discussed the Project in each Full Forum meeting.

Joint Forum/Steelsite University Research.

All but one agenda proposed discussion on the NLCB Health and Social Research Programme funded joint SDVF/Steelsite University research project – in all but the July 2000 meeting the Forum discussed this research. In May 2000, a Steelsite University researcher gave a thorough presentation on this research project.

Forum Sub-Groups.

Four out of five agendas proposed discussion on the Forum's sub-groups – in four out of six Full Forum meetings, one or more of these sub-groups were discussed.

Funding Issues.

The SDVF discussed funding a lot throughout the research period, mainly the Home Office's CRP and Hillshire Police's CIP. Discussion on the CRP was proposed in three agendas and discussed in three SDVF meetings. This discussion, though, amounted to the SDVF co-ordinator/development worker reporting that the SDVF would bid to the CRP; that it had bidded; and, finally, that it had failed in its bid.

The CIP was the other main funding issue discussed. A presentation on the CIP was one of two presentations the SDVF Full Forum received in June 1999. Discussion on the CIP was proposed in the September 1999 agenda and in the September 1999 meeting the co-ordinator discussed bids to the CIP by domestic violence organizations in Steelsite, including the SDVF. The SDVF did not discussed the CIP in January 2000 or March 2000 but discussion on the CIP was again proposed in the May 2000 agenda and discussed in the meeting. A police representative recommended that organizations discuss proposed bids with the SDVF before submitting them to the CIP – the co-ordinator/development worker explained that, though this was not a 'vetting' process, it would avoid duplication. A police representative; the co-ordinator/development worker; an Alpha Domestic Violence Project representative; a Beta Domestic Violence Project representative; and a RSACS representative then discussed the CIP bidding procedure. The co-ordinator/development worker said that the SDVF would bid to fund the co-ordinator's post and expressed hope that the SDVF would soon receive 'core funding' "...because it seems crazy that we're competing for funding with the local projects..." (SDVF 18.5.00.). Finally, discussion on the CIP was proposed in the July 2000 agenda and discussed in the meeting. The co-ordinator/development worker discussed the CIP bidding procedure and repeated her May 2000 comment that it is

nonsensical that the SDVF's CIP bid was in competition with voluntary domestic violence organizations' bids.

'Information Sharing' and AOB Issues.

Another standard agenda issue was '*information sharing*'. As '*information sharing*' in June 1999, police representatives discussed Hillshire police procedures; reported that a force policy would soon be released; and suggested that a recent Hillshire Police hosted DVOs' conference was valuable in "...getting everyone together to talk..." (SDVF 18.6.99.). The SDVF Chair then reported that a SCC domestic violence policy was now operative and that a formal domestic violence officers' team had been convened. Information was also shared on a new Community Health Steelsite domestic violence task group; on a new Hillshire Probation Service policy; and on a forthcoming Action Against Men's Violence Steelsite (AAMVS) meeting. Finally, the SDVF co-ordinator gave some 'funding news' – that the Beta Domestic Violence Project and a local Asian women's refuge had received NLCB funding.

The September 1999 agenda proposed two information and AOB issues that were discussed in the meeting. First, research about the Beta Domestic Violence Project and, secondly, a planned Gamma Domestic Violence Project conference on children and domestic violence – the SDVF co-ordinator described both. The SDVF discussed further information and AOB issues – the Alpha Domestic Violence Project's representatives told attendees about the Project's AGM and the co-ordinator told attendees about a Lord Chancellor's Department Review of Children's Safety and Parental Contact; a Voluntary Action Steelsite organized conference on 'partnership' between the voluntary sector and the SCC; the launch of the 'Steelsite Women's Forum'; and the launch of an organization 'COSAC', 'Carers of Sexually Abused Children'. The co-ordinator and Chair also told attendees about a Hillshire Police questionnaire on policing priorities. Finally, an Alpha Domestic Violence Project representative warned SDVF attendees that a sham 'Rape Crisis' organization had been established in Belleton, unconnected to Steelsite Rape Crisis or the National Rape Crisis Federation.

In January 2000, the SDVF discussed just one information sharing and AOB issue – the co-ordinator/development worker described the 'Stopping Domestic Violence Steelsite' information booklet and the Steelsite domestic violence contact cards for women experiencing domestic violence that the SDVF was updating with Voluntary Sector Development Project funds.

In March 2000, the SDVF discussed four information sharing issues. First, a Steelsite Family Services Unit representative asked about services for black women. The Chair and co-ordinator/development worker rather dismissed the question, saying that it could not be discussed there and then. Secondly, a Gamma Domestic Violence Project representative told attendees that the Project was facing a funding crisis[109]. She said that she had discussed this crisis with the SDVF's co-ordinator/development worker but was keen to discuss it with the Full Forum. She expressed concern that "...we're setting up other community projects and not supporting existing ones[110]..." (SDVF 23.3.00.) and proposed that a Steelsite-wide approach was needed. The co-ordinator/development worker responded but, although the Gamma Project representative seemed unappeased, the Chair opined that the issue was too extensive to be discussed there and then. Thirdly, an artist discussed an arts organization undertaking a 'what is domestic bliss?' project in which workshops would be held and work exhibited. Finally, the co-ordinator/development worker told attendees that leaflets on domestic violence for traveller/gypsy women were available and would be enclosed in a future 'Forum Mailing'.

In May 2000, the co-ordinator/development worker discussed four information sharing and AOB issues – she described a project in which domestic violence survivors build houses; reported that the Women's Self-Defence Group was bidding to the CIP; discussed an internet consultation session on domestic violence; and reported on a conference on 'partnership' between the voluntary sector and the SCC. Finally, the SDVF welcomed a Red Cross representative who demonstrated head and arm massage techniques. Attendees discussed whether the techniques demonstrated could be used in refuges or other support environments.

In July 2000, just one issue was discussed as information sharing – an AAMVS representative revealed that the organization now had no funds.

Presentations.

The SDVF Full Forum received numerous presentations in the research period. In June 1999, a Hillshire Police 'Crime and Disorder Liaison Inspector' gave an extensive presentation on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. He described Steelsite's statutory

[109] See above.

[110] The reader will remember that in its 1998/99 Annual Report, the SDVF announced plans to begin work with women and workers in an area of Steelsite which is not covered by a community based support project.

partnership – the SSSG – and Steelsite's crime and disorder strategy. After this presentation, the SDVF co-ordinator; a SCC Community Safety Team representative; a Steelsite Health Authority representative; an SCC Education Department representative; and numerous police attendees then discussed how "...what the Forum is doing can be built in..." (SDVF 18.6.99.) to Steelsite's crime and disorder provisions. Throughout, discussion centred on these police attendees. Also in June 1999, a Community Safety Team representative gave a presentation on the CIP bidding procedure. Just one attendee questioned the presenter. Again, discussion centred on the Hillshire Police attendees.

In January 2000, a Steelsite Rape & Sexual Abuse Counselling Service (SRSACS) representative gave a presentation on that Service's service provision – attendees discussed it. Then, a Women's Self-Defence Group representative gave a presentation on 'the experiences of women's groups working against male violence in post-communist Eastern Europe'. Again, attendees discussed it, especially enthusing "...how far we have come..." (SDVF 20.1.00.) on violence against women and children.

In March 2000, a Hillshire Police representative gave a thorough presentation on a Steelsite based Hillshire Police Special Abuse Unit that responds to serious sexual assaults on women, known offender child abuse and other offences where the offender is known. After the presentation, attendees, mostly the presenter; another police representative; Alpha Domestic Violence Project representatives; a Victim Support representative; and a solicitor, had a long discussion about children in court. The SDVF co-ordinator/development worker then encouraged the presenter to discuss the issue of 'disclosure' and these same attendees had another long discussion about children disclosing domestic violence; counselling children before prosecution; whether and how prosecution serves children's interests; the likelihood of a 'successful' outcome; and whether a successful outcome could be achieved without prosecution. Finally, an Alpha Domestic Violence Project representative put a question about police training on domestic violence. She said that the police persist in making "...value judgements..." in domestic violence – police attendees replied that stereotyping the police is unhelpful and that "...the police have come a long way..." (SDVF 23.3.00.).

In May 2000, a Steelsite University researcher gave an extensive presentation on the NLCB funded research project, 'Domestic Abuse Women Seeking Help'. Representatives of the Alpha Domestic Violence Project; Beta Domestic Violence

Project; and RSACS, as well as the University researcher and the co-ordinator/development worker, discussed the research project, especially safety issues in conducting the research.

Finally, in July 2000, a Steelsite social services representative gave an extensive presentation on the new Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families[111] and an Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) representative gave a presentation about recommendations from the recent Part 8 Review into child death.

Clearly, no such presentations were on domestic violence service provision. Though some were on attending agencies' service provision, others were much less centred on service provision and much more centred on *women's issues*. The January 2000 presentation on women's groups in Eastern Europe created a certain 'feel-good-factor' in the SDVF – "...if only women from Eastern Europe could come over and see how women have united for each other in this country..." (SDVF 20.1.00.) – and this presentation certainly brought attendees together 'as women'. But this presentation did not centre on domestic violence or domestic violence service provision and probably suited the Steelsite Women's Forum just as much as (more than?) it suited the SDVF.

Further, even in those presentations on agencies' service provision, the Forum had little discussion on women's experiences of that provision; whether and how service provision might be developed; whether and how the SDVF might develop it; et cetera. More, outside these presentations the SDVF Full Forum did not once discuss domestic violence or domestic violence service provision. May 2000 discussion about a "...shared [domestic violence] definition for Steelsite..." (SDVF 18.5.00.) seemed the nearest it came to discussing domestic violence. Certainly, it did not discuss the Gamma Domestic Violence Project's service provision to men, though the Project representative said in research interviews that this provision had been "...questioned..." (Interviewee 26).

Possibly, discussion on service provision happened in the SDVF's sub and task groups. Certainly, the children and young persons sub-group had a task group that said that it discussed children's services. More probably, the SDVF did not discuss domestic violence and domestic violence service provision because, as the PDVTG in Pittplace, it spent too much time discussing the issues set out here. Since most such issues were centred on the Forum's outputs, it spent too much time discussing *Forum work*.

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[111] Discussed below.

Does this focus on outputs and work in SDVF discussion come through in research interviews too?

> Researcher: "...what is the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...it's a co-ordination of different agencies to work together towards a policy and strategy for domestic violence and also inform each agency of what's happening in different areas and to enable them to develop...in terms of co-ordinating the approaches between agencies..." (Interviewee 40).
>
> Interviewee: "...my understanding of it is that it is to, well to co-ordinate really..." (Interviewee 34).
>
> Interviewee: "...well, it's co-ordinating everything that's going on around domestic violence I would say..." (Interviewee 28).
>
> Interviewee: "...what I think it is, or should be, is a co-ordinating forum for agencies that come into contact with women experiencing domestic violence..." (Interviewee 24).

This attendee, then, is unusual:

> "...well, my understanding of it is that it is a group of people, from a variety of different agencies (voluntary and statutory), who come together to try to improve the response to domestic violence in the City..." (Interviewee 41).

So, the Forum discussed certain standard issues, discussing them in like manner throughout the research period. As seen throughout, the Chair and/or co-ordinator/development worker mentioned an issue and the co-ordinator/development worker then discussed it. Sometimes attendees, usually the same ones, then discussed that issue. Which same attendees discussed issues? Who talked?

Who Talked?

The attendees that discussed issues tended to be the SCC Housing Department representative (the Chair); an Alpha Domestic Violence Project representative; the SCC Social Services Department representative; and, slightly less so, a Steelsite Health Authority representative. So, certain attendees assumed a greater role in discussions. Mostly, though, the main contributors were different meeting to meeting.

Unquestionably, Hillshire Police attendees talked the most in the June 1999 SDVF Full Forum. These attendees appeared en masse in this meeting – most were uniformed and all but one sat together on one side of the table as the other attendees sat on the other. Discussion throughout this meeting centred on these police attendees. No other attendee held court in this manner in the research period. Interestingly, though, on the one other occasion (March 2000) that Hillshire Police attended en masse, they did not hold court and other SDVF attendees joined the police attendees in long discussions and put questions (some rather contentious) to them in the meeting.

Also, other attendees talked much more than others (including police attendees) in other meetings. Much discussion in January 2000 centred on a SCC Social Services

Department attendee. This attendee had, alongside the co-ordinator/development worker, written a 'Multi-Agency Strategy On Domestic Abuse'. Both discussed the strategy in January 2000. The social services attendee, though, took a lead role, directing discussions through recommending the issues to be discussed.

Likewise, much discussion in May 2000 centred on certain domestic violence organization attendees. Not only did much discussion on the presentation centre on these attendees[112], but discussion on other topics centred on them too. So, discussion on the CIP centred on them. Likewise, discussion about a 'shared definition for Steelsite' centred on the co-ordinator/development worker; an Alpha Domestic Violence Project representative; a Beta Domestic Violence Project representative; and SRSACS attendees. The discussion focused on the importance of mentioning 'abuse of power'; whether domestic 'violence' or 'abuse' was favoured; whether examples of 'typical relationships' should be mentioned; whether 'lesbian/gay' or 'same-sex' relationships was preferred; that an explanation on the location of the abuse/violence was valuable; and whether 'emotional', 'psychological' or both should be mentioned in defining domestic violence. Just one other attendee joined in – as someone encouraged that Hillshire Police's definition be amended, a police representative said that "...yes, the definition might change..." (SDVF 18.5.00.)[113].

So, some attendees talked more than others in SDVF Full Forum meetings but this domination happened in just some meetings. Interestingly, the one and only 'attendee' talking much, much more than other attendees in *each* meeting was the Forum co-ordinator/development worker. As seen[114], the co-ordinator/development worker assumed a massive role in discussions in the July 2000 meeting. Not only did she talk in each discussion, sometimes being the only attendee talking, she also directed and determined discussions. She directed and determined when and how issues were discussed but she also directed and determined *what* was discussed. Readers might remember that, in July 2000, a social services representative gave a presentation on the new Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need. Seemingly, she had given this presentation because, as she put it, the co-ordinator/development worker had recommended that she "...start a discussion about the implications [of the new

[112] See discussion above.
[113] For information, the definition of domestic violence in the new Hillshire Police is: "...domestic violence is physical, mental, emotional or sexual abuse by a partner, ex partner or a family member..." (Hillshire Police Domestic Violence Policy 2000). Interestingly, the views expressed here by domestic violence organization representatives were generally reflected in the definition, contained in the Forum's multi-agency strategy.
[114] See Appendix M.

framework] for partner agencies..." (SDVF 20.7.00.). This, though, seemed quite normal – the role the co-ordinator/development worker took in July 2000 mirrored the role she took in every other meeting. Interestingly, once she had become 'Voluntary Sector Development Worker' and another co-ordinator had been appointed, she continued to direct and determine.

Research interviews reflect this focus on the co-ordinator/development worker. Certainly, the SDVF Chair responded to numerous research interview questions with:

> "...[name] would know all of that..."
> "...[name] would be in a much better position to say..." (Interviewee 38)

More than one research interviewee also responded to interview questions with:

> "...[name] has been quite key in that really, the central focus for that..." (Interviewee 34)
> "...[name] has been the focus..." (Interviewee 46).
> "...Well [name]'s quite the driving force behind this..." (Interviewee 30).
> "...I think we tend to rely on [name]..." (Interviewee 41).

There appear to be two issues that explain who dominated and when. First, those dominating discussions were those who had something to say about *the particular discussion*.

So, police attendees held court in June 1999 but clearly they had something to say about the particular discussion – their responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and their funding programme, the CIP. As seen earlier, police attendees assumed a main role in discussions on the CIP in other meetings. Seemingly, then, the police held court in June 1999 not because they were police attendees but because they had information on and knowledge about the topic being discussed. That is not to suggest, though, that *all* police attendees were in the know about the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and funding issues, such as the CIP. Certainly, some research interviews in Steelsite suggest that not all police attendees had this knowledge. Take Interviewee 27 (a DVO):

> Researcher: "...Do you know anything about the Crime and Disorder Strategy in Steelsite?..."
> Interviewee: "...Not particularly, no..." (Interviewee 27).

Likewise, Interviewee 27 said that SDVF discussions on funding go "...way over my head...".

So, research observations suggest that the police were in the know about the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and funding issues but some research interviews in Steelsite suggest that not all police attendees had this knowledge.

As an aside, were other SDVF attendees in the know about these issues? Because the SDVF only discussed the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in June 1999, research observations are less instructive than research interviews on this question[115]. Yet, although these interviews do suggest that some SDVF attendees had more knowledge than others, they do not suggest a *pattern* to this differential knowledge. Interviewees from statutory, voluntary and private sector organizations and from both good and poor attendees on the SDVF were questioned about the Crime and Disorder Act 1998[116]. Interestingly, neither interviewees' sector nor attendance determined their knowledge on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998:

Researcher: "...How will the [SDVF's] Multi-Agency Strategy relate to the Crime and Disorder strategy in Steelsite?..."

Interviewee: "...In the linkage to the Safer Steelsite Group, really..." (Interviewee 41).

Researcher: "...I don't suppose you know how the [SDVF's] Multi-Agency Strategy will relate to the Crime & Disorder strategy?..."

Interviewee: "...Erm...the Crime & Disorder Strategy? Who is masterminding that? Is it a government...?..."

Researcher: "...Yes, the Safer Steelsite Steering Group and all of that?..."

Interviewee: "...Steelsite Steering Group, yes. No, I have to admit I begin to get into a little bit of vagueness at this point..." (Interviewee 22).

Researcher: "...How will the Forum Multi-Agency Strategy relate to the Crime and Disorder Strategy in Steelsite?...."

Interviewee: "...It's linked in, I mean it's a pity that it's not, it hasn't got a more prominent place, position in the Crime and Disorder Strategy..." (Interviewee 40).

Researcher: "...How will [the Forum's Multi-Agency] Strategy relate to the Crime and Disorder Strategy in Steelsite?..."

Interviewee: "...Part of the funding for the [SDVF] co-ordinator – that comes from the CIP. And the only people who get funded under the CIP money are people who fit the Steelsite Crime and Disorder...So that ties in very closely..." (Interviewee 38).

Researcher: "...How do you think that that [SDVF's] Multi-Agency Strategy is going to relate to the Crime & Disorder strategy in Steelsite?

Interviewee: "...I don't know to be honest with you..." (Interviewee 30).

Researcher: "...Do you know about the Crime and Disorder Strategy [and the] Safer Steelsite Steering Group?..."

Interviewee: "...No, I don't know much about that, no..." (Interviewee 28).

Researcher: "...Do you know about the Crime and Disorder Strategy?..."

Interviewee: "...Urghhh!..."

Researcher: "...Right..."

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[115] This contrasts to the situation in Pittplace where issues about the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 were seen through research observations. Pittplace interviewees were not questioned about it.

[116] See Chapter Three for information on whether these interviewees were statutory, voluntary or private sector. That information can be matched with the information set out earlier in this Chapter on good and poor attendance.

Interviewee: "...A bit but not very much..." (Interviewee 26).

Researcher: "...And what about the Crime and Disorder Strategy – do you know anything about that?..."

Interviewee: "...Well, I know about the YOTS – I'm only vaguely familiar..." (Interviewee 34).

So, some SDVF attendees *did* have more knowledge than others on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 but this differential knowledge seemed more about the individual interviewee than about their organization, sector or attendance.

Did other SDVF attendees know about funding issues? As seen earlier, domestic violence organization representatives were the other attendees (not including the SDVF co-ordinator/development worker, who was always in the frame) that were the ones in the frame as funding was discussed. Clearly, this explains why domestic violence organization attendees assumed a greater role than others in discussions about the CIP in May 2000. Again, they had something to say about the particular discussion. They assumed a lead role because they had information on and knowledge about the topic being discussed.

Domestic violence organization attendees also assumed a lead role as other topics were discussed in May 2000. Again, though, they had something to say about the particular discussion. Clearly, domestic violence organizations possess much information on and knowledge about safety issues in domestic violence – promoting women's safety underpins their service provision. Also, they are informed and knowledgeable about definitional issues – these organizations continually seek to challenge stereotypes about domestic violence. Certainly, although no attendee voiced a 'non-expert' opinion on domestic violence (as happened on more than one occasion in Pittplace) in the SDVF, research observations and interviews highlight that both good SDVF attendees – the Alpha Domestic Violence Project, the Beta Domestic Violence Project, Steelsite Women's Aid – and poorer attendees – the Steelsite Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Service, the Omega Refuge et cetera – were in the know about domestic violence.

The issue that those dominating discussions were those who had something to say about the particular discussion stands to reason, but it should be stressed that domination in SDVF discussions was based not on *who* was discussing but on *what* was being discussed. This means, surely, that *who defines* what is being discussed becomes an increasingly important question.

Secondly, those dominating discussions were those who had something to say about the Forum's *outputs*. The Forum co-ordinator/development worker obviously comes to mind here, but so does the SCC Social Services representative. She assumed a big role in discussions in January 2000, largely because she had something to say about a main Forum output – the Multi-Agency Strategy. This representative, and others who had something to say about the Forum's outputs, were able to assume such a role in discussions because the Forum spent so much time in these discussions discussing its outputs.

A Final Word about Discussion in the SDVF.

As a final word, it might be mentioned that understanding SDVF meetings, and discussions in them, could sometimes be difficult. Attendance in each meeting numbered up to 20 and, though each attendee gave their name and agency as the meeting commenced, it could sometimes be hard to remember who was who. The Forum also frequently used initials. More than one agenda proposed discussion on 'CIP funding' or 'NLCB research', without explanation that 'CIP' stood for Hillshire Police's Community Initiatives Programme or that 'NLCB' stood for National Lotteries Charities Board. Other initials were used in discussions – on numerous occasions, funding bodies, organizations, services et cetera were mentioned as initials but not in full.

Whether or not attendees understood these initials or not is moot. Only once did an attendee admit in a meeting to not understanding – as the SDVF discussed 'PCGs' (Primary Care Groups) in September 1999, an Alpha Domestic Violence Project representative asked what they were. But some attendees admitted in research interviews that they sometimes did not understand. Questioned about whether the WAFE see sitting around the table with statutory agencies as 'problematic', this Steelsite Women's Aid representative said:

> "...No, I don't think it's problematic. For me personally, and this is very personal, I sometimes find it a bit intimidating really...."

The interview continued:

> Researcher: "...Working with statutory agencies?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Yeah. And probably because they're people who're higher up and sometimes they use initials that they think everybody knows and I'm sat there thinking I'm not quite sure what you mean...."
>
> Researcher: "...Is this at Forum meetings?
>
> Interviewee: "...Yeah, yeah...."

The interviewee stressed, though, that 'intimidation' is not a *people* issue but a *meeting* issue:

> "...If I were to meet anybody – one of them, any one of them – I wouldn't be intimidated. It's the group..." (Interviewee 28).

A number of points are raised here. The first point is that this interviewee did not understand the initials – the language – used. Perhaps, SDVF meetings were too 'formal and stilted' as initiative meetings were in Hague and colleagues' research. Other interviews also raise points about the language used. As Interviewee 28 had done, a Probation Service interviewee mentioned the point without first being questioned about it. Asked about changing attendance in meetings, she said:

> "...I think if somebody is coming fresh to the domestic violence Forum, they need to attend consistently to pick up on what's happening, to understand the issues, to meet people, to network effectively...So if somebody was to take over from me it would take a while for them to get established and to know things and to. If I don't understand the language, that's not quite what I mean but, it's getting into the way of thinking and the way of understanding about the issues..." (Interviewee 40).

Research observations and interviews suggest, then, that really understanding SDVF meetings and discussion could require certain previous knowledge about the language used in these meetings. This suggestion might explain the changing membership seen in the SDVF. The drifting out after one or two meetings seen in the research period might be based on attendees without such knowledge just not understanding the SDVF's discussions and not staying around to learn. Possibly, some attend but do not understand and, rather than 'stick it out', just not attend again – possibly, most drift *out* because of the problems in 'getting *in*'. Perhaps, then, Adam Crawford (1999) is right to suggest that 'understanding' is a 'filter for inclusion'.

The second point is that Interviewee 28 seemed concerned about attendees' statutory status and, especially, their hierarchical positions – 'they're people who're higher up'. Other Steelsite interviewees also suggested concerns about hierarchy. Asked about statutory sector attendance, one interviewee expressed her disappointment that SCC's Chief Executive had been the main speaker in the SDVF's Annual General Meeting:

> "...I was disappointed, shall I say, that at the Annual General Meeting they [the Forum] had [name], who's the Chief Executive of the Council. And I actually spoke at that meeting to say, because [the Chief Executive] was sort of using the meeting to say how committed they [the Council] were around domestic violence. So I spoke at the end of the meeting when they asked questions and sort of challenged him...and I think, for me, I would have liked to sort of hear the voice of, sort of, rather than hear his voice, sort of hear the voice of, sort of, survivors or women involved in campaigns, or women. It's a time, a time for those voices to be heard..." (Interviewee 24).

Seemingly, then, some in the Steelsite Forum held different opinions to some in the Pittplace Forum about seniority being 'good'.

The third point raised is that Interviewee 28 found Forum meeting settings intimidating. Again other interviewees also raised this point without first being questioned about it. Asked about 'good' and 'bad' features of multi-agency approaches, this Steelsite Family Services Unit representative mentioned concerns about the police. The interview continued:

> Researcher: "...Do you feel that you are accommodated well when you go?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Erm, reasonably. It is a big gathering and I think you have to be quite brave to speak and to be sure of what you're talking about...and perhaps sometimes, I mean, I have raised things and mentioned things and it is, can be quite, you know, it's a big group...Yes, it can make it quite difficult to contribute...." (Interviewee 37).

Perhaps, SDVF meetings were also 'alienating and inhibiting' as meetings had been in Hague and colleagues' research.

Other Points About Discussion in the Initiatives Researched.

Disagreement.

There were no 'difficult situations' seen in the initiatives researched. Just occasionally in Pittplace/Steelsite did things become difficult – first, in the September 1999 PDVTG meeting and, secondly, in the July SDVF Full Forum meeting. The atmosphere seemed rather strained in the September 1999 PDVTG as the Chair complained of "...talking to myself..." (PDVTG 2.9.99.) in unsuccessfully encouraging discussion on a planned Health Action Zone funding bid under PDVTG objective eight. Likewise, SSC social service representatives were rather lambasted in their July 2000 SDVF Full Forum presentation on the new Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need. Here, SDVF attendees, including the usual SCC social services representative, voiced concerns about the framework and quizzed the social services presenters about it. But the presenters appeared unresponsive to attendees' concerns. Further, they were unable to answer some questions posed and explained that they had not been trained on some procedures. On this explanation, a refuge representative observed that "...you're confused; *we're* confused..." – the usual social services representative proposed that "...as a Forum, we..." (SDVF 20.7.00.) write to social services. Finally, though the presenters said that the new framework would improve present child protection procedures, the co-ordinator/development worker questioned how those procedures would improve – "...we can't get social services to act now when it is a serious issue so how will that change in the future? There is concern that the [local domestic violence] projects will just get more things dumped on them..." (SDVF 20.7.00.).

Interestingly, on both occasions here, difficulties seemed grounded in *perceived poor commitment* to multi-agency approaches or domestic violence – the PDVTG Chair seeing some attendees as not committed to the Group and SDVF attendees seeing social services as not committed to domestic violence. Beyond these occasions, though, there were no 'difficult situations'.

How does this research observation compare to interview responses? Most research interviewees said that that there had been no disagreements in Pittplace/Steelsite initiatives. To the question, 'have you ever noticed any disagreements between Topic Group participants?', PDVTG interviewees said:

> "...No I haven't yet, nothing of significance. Any at all you're asking? Disagreement's too strong a word, no..." (Interviewee Five).
>
> "...Lively discussion! Disagreement no, because we're all, sort of, batting from the same wicket. The direction in which we hit the ball maybe slightly different. But we're all along the same lines. And we seem to come to amicable agreement in the end..." (Interviewee Ten).
>
> "...I think sometimes you have a viewpoint coming from a different position. But I think ultimately we end up in the same place. There's been nothing where you think 'oh, I don't like that'. We've got on really well..." (Interviewee Eleven).
>
> "...No I can't think I have, no. I think, it's, people have always spoken with one voice really..." (Interviewee Twelve).

To the same question, SDVF attendees said:

> "...Remarkably little actually, I'd say...it does seem to work very much on a consensus model. Now, that might be because the Forum is working on a topic where the history of partnership is actually a bit longer. So some of the, sort of, the fighting about principles has gone on in the past...common purposes have been established..." (Interviewee 41).
>
> "...There's certainly been disagreement in Full Forum meetings, yes – not recently. We went through a phase when there was concern about working with men and that resources would be put into that and detract from services for women and there were disagreements about that...I mean disagreements and discussions of that sort are part and parcel of meeting together, really. It's when people can't say things that you have real problems. If someone bottles up something and goes away and just doesn't come back again. And I'm not aware of that having happened. I mean, there was problems with one of the local projects at one point and the way they were working and some of their policies, and. But that was sorted. I mean, that involved quite a lot of work to sort it. But it was sorted..." (Interviewee 40).
>
> "...They'll be discussions about what's the best way forward. There's not generally a lot of conflict, I think sometimes, the nearest it gets is sometimes when we're discussing what role we should take with men. Because...we all believe that it would be useful if the perpetrators could be, not treated, but in some way dealt with so that they didn't continue it. But we don't feel, we feel that our first responsibility is towards the women. There's sometimes, there's a little bit of tension between how much effort should we be putting in to that and we've still to resolve that in that we will support groups, they are welcome to come to the Forum because they will benefit from our understanding. But that's probably the only thing that causes conflict in that how much of our resources should we be putting in to that side of things when our focus is much more closely on helping women. But apart from that, there's not a great deal of conflict. (Interviewee 38).

So, research interviews support the finding, seen through observations, that there were no 'difficult situations' or disagreements in the initiatives researched.

Both research observations and research interviews suggest points that might explain this finding – these points are further discussed in Chapter Six.

Before, After and Outside Meetings.

Hitherto we have covered the meeting setting, but what about before, after and outside this setting? Before and after PDVTG meetings, representatives exchanged information and gossiped. On one occasion, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline Chair and the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge representative discussed a possible Group/Helpline and Refuge joint funding bid; on another occasion, the Psychological Health Care Service perpetrators' group representative discussed a planned Performing Arts Development Service (PADS) performance in the perpetrators' group; and on a further occasion, some health representatives discussed their intra-organizational 'isolation'. Representatives sometimes discussed personal issues and, on more than one occasion, gossiped about their partners. Nonetheless, discussion of service users only occasionally characterized time before and after PDVTG gatherings. Occasionally, organizational representatives were observed discussing cases. Never, though, were these representatives observed mentioning names.

Sometimes, there were exchanges of information on attending organizations before and after PMADVF gatherings. Before one meeting, the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge representative discussed a planned fundraising night and handed out 'fliers' and, after another meeting, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline Chair discussed (and showed attendees around) that Group/Helpline's new crèche. Usually, though, neither exchanges of information nor gossip nor discussion of clients characterized this time in the PMADVF.

Organizational representatives engaged in long discussions before and after SDVF meetings and on those occasions meetings were punctuated with a coffee break. On one such occasion, in re-starting the meeting, the Chair expressed her sadness in "...breaking up all this networking..." (SDVF 20.1.00.). Yet, it proved impossible to observe what these representatives were discussing because, since numerous representatives attended the SDVF, many discussions happened simultaneously.

What about outside the meeting setting? Some attendees clearly talked to each other about the initiatives' outputs outside meetings. Sometimes, behind the scenes discussions were planned. Other times, behind the scenes discussions were recounted in initiative meetings. Many times, though, behind the scenes discussions were not explained or even mentioned. Through being a keen observer, as clues were dropped into discussions in the PDVTG and the SDVF, the researcher was able to work out who had been talking to whom about what. Whether other attendees would have been able

to work this out is questionable. Also, the researcher attended other multi-agency settings in which behind-the-scenes discussions were recounted. Again, the researcher was able to use these settings to work out what had been discussed behind the scenes but since many PDVTG and SDVF attendees did not attend these other settings, they were not able to use them in this manner.

Most behind the scenes discussions centred on certain attendees. In the PDVTG, they centred on the Group Chair and the PCSP Director, and less so, the Refuge and Group/Helpline representatives. In Steelsite, behind the scenes discussions centred on the SDVF co-ordinator and a SCC social services representative, as well as, unsurprisingly, the Group Chair, and the Alpha and Beta Domestic Violence Projects' representatives.

Concluding, because multi-agency domestic violence initiatives' main focus appears to be their meetings and also because past research has not documented in detail the meeting setting in such initiatives, the discussions held in such meetings in Pittplace and Steelsite have been described thoroughly here. Summarizing, the PDVTG discussed issues proposed in agendas – these agendas proposed the same discussion issues, the Group's objectives; funding; Pittplace's crime and disorder strategy; and the previous meeting's minutes, and AOB issues. The Group did usually discuss the issues proposed in agendas, though it did digress in the two meetings without an agenda. Much discussion centred on the Group's objectives and the Group seemed unable or unwilling to move beyond discussing its objectives. Further, throughout the research period, it seemed that issues like domestic violence service provision and the issue of domestic violence were marginalized as time and again PDVTG discussion reverted to the Group's objectives or the other issues set out above – it did not discuss domestic violence. Finally, PDVTG minutes suggest that the Group could be more concerned with what it says it is doing rather than what it is doing.

Reflecting on discussions in the Pittplace Forum, a main point is raised. Although sometimes seeming to be no more than chatting, much Forum discussion did centre on domestic violence. The Forum discussed domestic violence, domestic violence service provision *and* how women experience that provision throughout the research period. As such, the Pittplace Forum maintained a solid connection to the issue. Although some opinions on domestic violence were unsophisticated and the Forum did not discuss domestic violence and children, the Forum did not marginalize domestic violence as the PDVTG did.

Finally, most SDVF Full Forum discussion was prescribed. Each Full Forum had an agenda – agendas were long and prescribed numerous issues for discussion, some even prescribed AOB issues. The typical issues prescribed were the Forum's Multi-Agency Strategy on Domestic Abuse; the NLCB Voluntary Sector Development Project; joint Forum/Steelsite University research; the Forum's sub-groups; funding issues, as well as 'information sharing' and AOB issues. Throughout the research period, the Forum discussed these standard issues. The Forum did not discuss domestic violence or domestic violence service provision. The Forum received presentations, some of which were on attending agencies' service provision but others were more about women's issues. Even in those presentations on service provision, the Forum had little discussion on how women experience that provision. Probably the Forum did not discuss domestic violence and domestic violence service provision because it spent too much time discussing its work priorities.

Perhaps the remaining points about discussions in the initiatives researched are that there was little disagreement and no difficult situations were seen – research interviewees confirmed this lack of conflict. Also, before and after the meetings observed, attendees sometimes engaged in discussions but their discussions tended to be more about gossiping and less about exchanging sensitive information about cases. Finally, it was clear that some attendees were talking to each other outside the meeting setting. Usually, these behind the scenes discussions centred on the same attendees and often they were not fully recounted or explained in meetings proper.

Some points seen here are picked up in Chapter Six. Perhaps the most interesting point about discussions in Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives is that each initiative researched *marginalized* domestic violence in their discussions. Unsurprisingly, this point is picked up in Chapter Six.

5. The Initiatives' Outputs.

Assuming that outputs are 'the products of a programme, narrowly defined in terms of what an organization has done', what were the initiatives' researched main outputs?

The Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group (PDVTG).

In the research period, the PDVTG:

- assumed a main role in Pittplace's crime and disorder process, formulating Pittplace's Community Safety Strategy's 'action plan' on domestic violence;
- supported the Pittplace Performing Arts Service in that Service's domestic violence production, 'Gobsmacked';

- continued to plan an additional refuge in Pittplace, as per PDVTG Objective Seven; and
- secured Health Action Zone (HAZ) funding for a part-time co-ordinator, as per PDVTG Objective Eight.

So, the PDVTG 'achieved' just one of its objectives (objective eight) in the research period. Possibly, this was because, as seen in our earlier discussions, PDVTG attendance changed meeting-to-meeting. Certainly, research observations suggest that work on these objectives slowed considerably as attendance changed. The designated lead on PDVTG objective two[117] attended in December 1998. This representative then moved organizations and stopped attending. No progress whatever was made over the research period on the training objective and discussion on that objective in July 2000 mirrored that seen in December 1998. Likewise, the designated lead on PDVTG objective six[118] stopped attending just as the research period commenced. Discussion on this objective in December 1998 was most uncertain. Only in January 2000 did it seem that work on the objective had resumed.

Some research interviewees saw this too:

> Researcher: "...How well do you think the Topic Group copes with changing membership?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...I'm not sure really, I don't know...I think probably the main way that it affects it is that some things go slowly because people who are kind of nominated to take the lead on various pieces of work have left and their successors haven't always picked the work up for whatever reason. So I think it slows things down ..." (Interviewee Twelve).

Other interviewees raised the point that 'picking up' centres on more than just *work* – new attendees must also 'pick up' *knowledge*. Interviewee Eight discusses how new attendees must "...catch up really, with what's been going off..." and how "...it's a bit like stabbing in the dark...". This interviewee found that "...I didn't know half of the stuff that had gone off..." and "...I've just picked it up as I've gone along...".

Other interviewees, though, did not see changing attendance as problematic:

> Researcher: "...How well would you say the Topic Group copes with changing membership?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Quite well..." (Interviewee Ten).
>
> Interviewee: "...From what I've seen they appear to be coping quite well...." (Interviewee Five).
>
> Interviewee: "...I don't really know because everyone seems to know each other anyway. I don't know if they meet in different forums. There are several groups, as well, on domestic violence..." (Interviewee One)[119].

Research observations and *some* research interviews suggest, then, that work on the Group's objectives slowed considerably as attendance changed, because work and

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[117] 'To undertake an audit of training skills in the area of domestic violence amongst members of the Topic Group and other local agencies, and to develop proposals for multi-agency and community training'.

[118] 'To establish links with local Health Forums in order to identify the scope for collaborative work on the impact of domestic violence on the health and well-being of the community'.

[119] See earlier discussions (point 13 under Attendance) that attendees were meeting in different settings.

knowledge are not picked up as attendance changes. Seemingly, then, changing attendance in the PDVTG was much more nuanced than just 'was the initiative sustained?' (Liddle and Gelsthorpe 1994a).

Other interviewees were questioned about why some objectives were not achieved. They suggested that the objectives themselves might not be clear or might be too wide:

> Researcher: "...Which of the objectives are not being met and why do you think they are not being met?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...I think some of the objectives are a little bit unclear. I think there's a need for discussion about what we really mean and what we want to get out of them. And I think some are very wide, as well...are we setting objectives that are realistic?..." (Interviewee Nine).

Other interviewees mentioned this too:

> Researcher: "...Do you feel that the Topic Group is meeting its originally established objectives or not?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...I think one or two of them are a bit wordy and aren't actually, I feel, aren't that clear, are not clear on what their actual meaning is – I think it's maybe been lost a little bit, over the years..." (Interviewee Two).

So, the PDVTG 'achieved' just one of its objectives in the research period. Interestingly, though the PDVTG 'achieved' just one objective in the research period, it seemed keen to 'tick off' its objectives as 'achieved'. More than once, the Group's discussion about an objective centred on whether or not it had been 'achieved'. Likewise, it 'ticked off' the objective 'to develop and implement a strategy for promoting the expeditious handling of crime of domestic violence within the Criminal Justice System' because 'Narey has been introduced'!

The other point about the PDVTG's outputs centres on the planned additional refuge in Pittplace. Seemingly, objective seven had been a PDVTG objective since the Group's beginnings. Yet, throughout the research period, the planned refuge seemed much more about the PDVTG *Chair's* personal goals and objectives rather than about the *Topic Group's* objectives. In December 1998 the Chair reported that a funding bid had been presented to the Housing Corporation and in March 1999 she reported that funding had been secured and that a small working group was examining how the proposed refuge would be managed. Though sometimes the Chair reported on the progress of the 'accommodation initiative', in successive meetings the Group rarely discussed objective seven. The planning of the refuge increasingly seemed a 'one woman show', run by the Chair. Sometimes, it seemed that the Chair had 'hijacked' this project.

Throughout, the researcher remained uncertain what was happening with the planned refuge – in an interview, the existing refuge representative seemed similarly uncertain:

> Researcher: "...How will the new initiative affect this refuge here and what will happen?..."

Interviewee: "...Well, we're not really that sure..." (Interviewee Eight).

More, in a research interview, the Chair said this about the project:

> "...The refuge, the accommodation [initiative] will provide better services. Because you'll have professional people who know what they're doing running and managing the refuge – which can have 24-hour access; which will have more beds; which, you know, which will have proper flat-lets rather than shoving people in rooms. And [rather than] only having four rooms for the entire borough we'll have eight plus three satellite houses. *I mean to an extent that would have happened without the Topic Group*..." (Interviewee Nine. Italics Supplied).

The point is, then, that it seemed a PDVTG objective had been used to realize a personal goal.

The refuge attendee's uncertainty about objective seven, however, was not uncommon – other attendees were also uncertain about the Group's objectives and outputs.

Some were clearly uncertain in meetings. In the May 1999 Topic Group meeting attendees confessed to never having understood the intention of objective six. In the January Pittplace Forum meeting the Chair mentioned "...the new co-ordinator..." (appointed in Summer 2000, as per objective eight) – a police DVO (also a Topic Group attendee and, as such, previously party to long discussions about the new co-ordinator) asked "...what new co-ordinator?..." (PMADVF 11.1.00.). Some research interviews support the suggestion in meetings that PDVTG attendees were uncertain about the Group's objectives and outputs. Certainly, the Group Chair said:

> Researcher: "...Do you think that most people do understand what [the objectives] are about?..."
> Interviewee: "...I don't know. But after this conversation I think I'll check..." (Interviewee Nine).

The Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum (PMADVF).

In the research period, the PMADVF received presentations from the PCSP Director on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions (and watched a video on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998) and received a presentation from a Hillshire Police Divisional Commander. Further, attendees discussed their opinions on domestic violence and service provision and occasionally discussed *their* service provision. Sometimes, attendees shared details on funding et cetera.

Interestingly, one PMADVF attendee thought the PMADVF had more outputs than this. In February 1999, the Pittplace District General Hospital (PDGH) NHS Trust hosted a 'domestic violence study day'. A PDVTG/PMADVF attendee – a PDGH Child Protection/Project Midwife – organized this day and numerous health practitioners attended, though the PMADVF Chair chaired it and PMADVF attendees attended. One such PMADVF attendee said subsequently in a research interview that "...I've just done some training in February for about 150 Health Professionals and we all did

different parts of it, all the members of the Forum did different parts of the training..." (Interviewee 16). Essentially, she credited the PMADVF with work that the Hospital did.

The Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum (SDVF).

In the research period, the SDVF:

- began planning a training programme for domestic violence organizations and those working on such issues as mental health, homelessness, substance misuse and child abuse;
- began a Voluntary Sector Development Project that includes a full-time paid worker to provide support and consultancy on policy development and good practice to voluntary organizations; an independent SDVF office and resource library; a supervision and mentoring scheme for voluntary sector workers; a pool of trained women interpreters; and updates of SDVF publications for women experiencing domestic violence. The Voluntary Sector Development Project commenced in October 1999 and in November 1999, the existing SDVF co-ordinator was appointed Voluntary Sector Development Worker. In February 2000 the process of founding pools of interpreters and supervisors/mentors commenced and in September 2000 domestic violence awareness courses for women interested in joining those pools commenced;
- launched the 'Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum Multi-Agency Strategy on Domestic Abuse';
- submitted an unsuccessful bid to the CRP; and
- commenced joint SDVF/Steelsite University research. In June 1999 the SDVF gained NLCB Health and Social Research Programme funding to research, with Steelsite University, workers' perceptions of domestic violence; the barriers women face when help-seeking for themselves and their children; and the views of children and young people who have survived domestic violence.

Many outputs in the research period continued the Forum's recent work around training; children; support for frontline and anti-oppressive work; domestic violence; and information sharing. Since this work has been examined earlier, just some points are made here. First, is a point about funding. As seen, much discussion in the Forum centred on funding. But funding did not just drive SDVF *discussions* – it also assumed a big role in driving the SDVF's *work priorities*. So, getting NLCB community involvement programme funding drove a main output – the voluntary sector development project – and getting NLCB health and social research programme funding drove another output – the joint SDVF/Steelsite University research. Clearly, funding and getting funding rather than domestic violence service provision – service provision *in* agencies – was driving the SDVF's work.

Other points centre on the Multi-Agency Strategy On Domestic Abuse and the bid to the CRP.

The Multi-Agency Strategy On Domestic Abuse

Following a 'Review and Action Planning Day', in June 1998, the SDVF co-ordinator; a SCC Social Services Department representative; and a SCC Equality Unit

representative started work on a multi-agency strategy on domestic violence. The SDVF intended that statutory agencies in the City would publicly sign up and commit themselves to the strategy. The SDVF's co-ordinator and the social services representative progressed work on the strategy. They prepared a corporate policy on domestic violence for the SCC and gave presentations on the proposed strategy to the Safer Steelsite Steering Group (SSSG).

In the SDVF's 1999 Annual General Meeting (AGM), a draft multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse was launched for consultation. Both voluntary sector and statutory sector consultation days were then held. The strategy was formally launched in July 2000 at a gathering in which the Chief Executive of SCC, the Chair of Steelsite Health Authority and the Deputy Chief Constable of Hillshire Police were speakers.

The strategy "...has as its primary aim..." the development of "...a consistent, co-ordinated response to domestic abuse throughout the city..." (SDVF 2000). It examines "...the national and local picture on domestic abuse..."; describes "...where we are now in Steelsite and where we want to get to..."; and proposes a "...detailed action planning framework..." to reach that position (SDVF 2000).

This 'action planning framework' lists 'tasks' for numerous agencies[120]. The strategy 'asks' each agency and/or service to convene a Domestic Abuse Task Group to "...oversee the drafting of..." a "...detailed strategic plan for their agency, with targets and milestones, and [a] financial plan..." (SDVF 2000). Each agency/service is asked to choose a 'designated link person' and to draft a domestic abuse policy and 'detailed practice guidance', as well as "...create clear systems for recording and monitoring domestic abuse..." (SDVF 2000). Further, the strategy promises that the SDVF "...will bring agencies together for an annual review of progress..." (SDVF 2000). Though clearly demanding, these tasks were given to some agencies in absentia – health services' tasks were certainly written by the SDVF co-ordinator/development worker and a Health Authority representative and the CPS's tasks were written by the SDVF co-ordinator/development worker and a Hillshire Probation Service representative:

[120] The agencies given tasks are the SDVF itself; the SCC, corporately; SCC Chief Executive Directorate; SCC Social Services; SCC Education Services (including Youth Service); SCC Housing and Direct Services; SCC Development, Environment, and Leisure Services; Health Service jointly; the Health Authority; NHS Trusts; Primary Care Groups; the Area Child Protection Committee; the Benefits Agency; Hillshire Police; Hillshire Probation Service; the Crown Prosecution Service; the Magistrates' Court; the County Court; the Family Court Welfare Service; Guardians Ad Litem; and "...Voluntary Sectors Agencies..." (SDVF 2000).

"...We [the CPS] were asked to look at what, we weren't asked to write our input – it was sort of presented to us in draft form and we have revised certain points and have submitted it back..." (Interviewee 37).

Accountability, then, was rather 'fragmented' (Crawford 1998, 1999) here. Possibly, then, Liddle and Gelsthorpe (1994a) are wrong to suggest that accountability is only an issue in informal multi-agency approaches.

Perhaps, though, the main point about this multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse centres on *enforceability*. Confusion surrounded the strategy's enforceability in the research period – nobody seemed sure whether it was a dream or a directive. The Hillshire Probation Service's Divisional Chief Probation Officer certainly seemed unsure:

Researcher: "...What is going to be the status of the Multi-Agency Strategy On Domestic Abuse?..."

Interviewee: "...Well, it, it's signed, as it's intended, it will be, it has the status of an agreed strategy – that's the purpose of it..." (Interviewee 53).

Some research interviewees also recognized this confusion and uncertainty about the strategy's enforceability:

Researcher: "...What will be the status of the action plans?..."

Interviewee: "...That's a really good question. And that's one of the things that I'm finding tricky...the status of the action plans I think is questionable, now....my anxiety about the action plans is that people will just come across them and think I don't know anything about this, how come this is down as an action plan for us. Which is almost inevitable really..."

Researcher: "...[The strategy] covers not only those represented on the Forum – is that right?..."

Interviewee: "...Yes – it's problem really. Yes, because it's trying to cover the whole of the Health Service and most of the Health Service hasn't had much relationship to the issue so far..."

Researcher: "...I presume this is in the strategy, but what kinds of undertakings have agencies given?

Interviewee: "...It's not really in the strategy..."

Researcher: "...Oh!..."

Interviewee: "...They haven't really given any undertakings yet, which is part of my problem!..." (Interviewee 41).

Likewise:

Researcher: "...What will be the status of th[e] action plans?

Interviewee: "...I'd like to say compulsory but they won't be. I mean it'll be up to higher management to look at them and decide whether they're feasible and maybe work towards them..."

Researcher: "...So it's left to the agencies to integrate them into their strategic planning?..."

Interviewee: "...Up to a point. But there's been a lot of work, [the co-ordinator] has done a lot of work with all the various agencies that are a part of that – to set up mechanisms for work taking place and development. But when it comes down to it, if nobody does that work, if I read the probation bit and say 'oh well I'm not bothered with that and I'm not going to tell anybody about it' then yes, no, nothing would happen..." (Interviewee 40).

One research interviewee set out the possible problems in this confusion and uncertainty about the strategy:

Researcher: "...What will be the status of the [SDVF's Multi-Agency] Strategy?..."

Interviewee: "...I think it's important. But I'm also mindful that there will be other agencies with mangers like our previous manager – who's male, middle-aged, doesn't really see it as a, as a priority..." (Interviewee 29).

So, a main SDVF output was a multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse but main points about it centre on accountability and enforceability.

The Forum's CRP Bid.

As seen, the Forum's bid to the Home Office's Crime Reduction Programme (CRP) caused much unhappiness in Pittplace and, as such, raised an interesting point about competition. Yet, it also raised an interesting point about the Forum's outputs. The Forum first discussed the CRP in March 2000. Here, the co-ordinator/development worker reported that a planning committee had been convened to devise and develop a bid to the CRP. She commented that "...given how advanced we are with our [multi-agency] strategy..." the SDVF was in a good position to bid but expressed concern that "...this is absolutely the wrong time for the SDVF..." and that "...we don't need this right now..." (SDVF 23.3.00.). Perhaps the Forum was becoming an end in itself here, being more concerned about Forum work than about whether and how a bid might develop service provision in Steelsite? Whatever, the co-ordinator/development worker explained that because the SSSG had warned that it would see the SDVF unfavourably were it not to bid, the SDVF *was* bidding. The SDVF then exhausted (wasted, given that it did not succeed?) time on a CRP bid.

The interesting point raised, then, is that the SDVF had an output that the SSSG *determined*. This would have been unsurprising in Pittplace. As seen, a main output of the PDVTG was formulating Pittplace's crime and disorder strategy's action plan on domestic violence. Also, both Pittplace initiatives discussed the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 throughout the research period and both held special meetings about it. Some in Pittplace seemed to see the Crime and Disorder Act as a panacea – 'ludicrously senior people owning this work' appeared to be 'the answer'. But it *was* surprising in Steelsite. The Forum had resisted being incorporated into Steelsite's statutory partnership, the Safer Steelsite Steering Group (SSSG), by becoming a sub-group of Safer Steelsite. Seemingly, there was an issue in Steelsite:

> "...about 'Safer Steelsite' being driven by the statutory agencies and domestic violence has its roots in the voluntary sector and how you balance that power thing out really. Because if the Domestic Violence Forum became a sub-group of Safer Steelsite it would sort of lose its autonomy. And maybe some of its credibility..." (Interviewee 41).

Does the SDVF's experience here mean that statutory partnerships might hold multi-agency domestic violence initiatives (even those resisting being encompassed in crime

and disorder processes) to ransom? Is, one questions, self-determination[121] a notion that is forgotten here?

As a last point, it might be mentioned that not all research interviewees supported the Forum's outputs. One interviewee comes to mind here. The Forum planned to found a community based support organization. Although no such organization had been founded as the research period ceased, the Gamma Domestic Violence Project attendee clearly did not support these plans. This was seen through research observations (March 2000). It is also seen in a research interview. Questioned about whether the Forum 'could be engaging in anything else that it is not engaging in', Interviewee 26 suggests that "...I think for Steelsite there ought to be a City wide approach to domestic abuse...". Questioned further about this suggestion, she says:

> "...at the moment [the Forum is] trying to set up yet another community group, well they're helping, you know, with the [name] area. And I think what they're doing is, like, not prioritising, keeping existing groups running. You know and getting statutory funding for existing groups..."

Subsequently in the interview:

> Researcher: "...I know we've sort of alluded to this, but could you say how the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum is important to you – is it important to you and why, and if not why not?
>
> Interviewee: "...Erm, well, I think to be honest Kirsty, I mean, at the moment we are facing a funding crisis and I have informed the Domestic Violence, well I informed the worker at the Domestic Violence Forum in January. And we have not received any sort of help or input. So at the moment it's probably quite a bad time to ask me that question. So..."
>
> Researcher: "...But I'm very interested in your answer, whatever it is..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Hmmm..."
>
> Researcher: "...You don't feel that you get the support that you want from the Forum?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...I don't feel that, it's, no. I mean I don't think that they have a great deal of input into us and we don't have the resources to go to meetings. If we did, I mean, I don't know what. I can't see what benefit it's doing us at the moment...In 1997 it was said that it should be a City wide initiative, you know, and it just seems to me that nothing's been done about that. And, like, we're still, you know, struggling for. And they're looking at setting up another group in another area of Steelsite and not supporting groups that are already, that are, you know, here now and need that support. So, no I don't think we're supported by the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum..."

The interviewee continues on this point:

> "...And I'm feeling quite annoyed about this because, you know, they're sort of supporting to get another group up in [name] and, like, and our group are feeling pretty annoyed really – that we've sort of been left..."

The Gamma interviewee's feelings about the Forum's plans and support (or no support) are strong and stood out on that ground alone. Yet they also stood out because they

[121] Self-determination is one of three 'foundation stones' of the refuge movement – the other two being self-help and empowerment.

were so different to other interviewees' feelings. Most other interviewees enthused about the Forum's support. Interviewee 39 voiced a received opinion:

> Researcher: "...Could you just say how membership and involvement with the Forum in Steelsite is important to you?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...Mainly, well support. We're working out in South-East Steelsite – it's sort of, it's a semi-rural area. But in very, you've got pockets of poverty and sometimes you can feel quite alienated out here. And I mean I have a lot of respect for my previous worker, co-worker, because she was working in isolation, part-time, no other worker to bat her ideas about with. And I'd imagine that had it not been for the Forum and similar organizations it could have been very demoralizing. And what the Forum enables us to do is to gain a little bit of strength and support from what's happening around, city-wide. And just check out that we're basically on the right lines. If we were working in isolation from the Forum or the sister projects I doubt that we would have developed at the level that we have in such a short period of time. Yes, so I think it is, it actually provides you with support and a framework in which to work..." (Interviewee 39).

Perhaps it might be mentioned here that SDVF attendees were not uncertain about the Forum's outputs as some PDVTG attendees had been about the Group's objectives and outputs. No confessions about ignorance or faux pas that revealed such ignorance were seen in SDVF meetings. This could centre more on the meetings setting[122] than on some special understandings but research interviews also suggested that SDVF attendees were not uncertain. Certainly, the interviews set out here suggest that, whatever their thoughts on it, interviewees did know about the Forum's work. When questioned about a main Forum output – the Multi-Agency Strategy on Domestic Abuse – other interviews were also in the know. Some said that, though they were "...aware that there is one...", they were "...not aware of what it is..." (Interviewee 24) but most (not all) did know about it and discussed it knowledgeably.

Summarising on outputs, no initiative researched was a 'talking shop' – each, including the PMADVF, had outputs that centred on more than joint talking. One main point about the PDVTG's outputs was that it achieved just one of its objectives in the research period. Possibly, this was because PDVTG attendance changed and work and knowledge were not picked up. Possibly, it was because the objectives were not clear or were too wide. But the Group seemed keen to tick off its objectives as achieved. Another main point centred on the planned additional refuge in Pittplace, the point being that it seemed a PDVTG objective had been used to realize a personal goal. This point is picked up in Chapter Six.

A main point about the SDVF's outputs centred on the enforceability of the Forum's multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse – was it a dream or a directive? Again, this

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[122] See earlier discussion about attendees' feelings that, inter alia, 'you've got to be brave to speak' in SDVF Full Forum meetings.

point is picked up in Chapter Six. Another important point about the SDVF's outputs was that the Forum had an output that the SSSG had determined – it bidded to the Home Office's CRP on the SSSG's instructions. Other points set out here and picked up in Chapter Six are that the Gamma Project interviewee was 'quite annoyed' that the SDVF planned to found another community support organization but are 'not supporting groups that are here now and need that support' and that most other Steelsite interviewees enthused about the Forum's support.

6. Attendees' Service Provision.

Hitherto, the focus has been on the initiatives researched. In the time that remains, attention turns to the agencies, organizations and individuals attending these initiatives, in particular their *service provision*.

First, and interestingly, research interviews suggest that service provision in numerous agencies and organizations in Pittplace and Steelsite was *collaborative*[123].

> "...Well, again, this is why we need the voluntary groups...I can't manage now without them. I need them on the end of that phone, to be able to ring them up and [say] 'can you contact this one', 'what about that one', 'what can we do for this person'..." (Interviewee Two).
>
> "...[The] refuge, domestic violence group on the voluntary side, they're the main two that I'm involved with. Social services on child protection issues, housing department. They are the main four that I sort of deal with day in day out. I also, casualty department, Accident & Emergency, I have quite a lot of dealing with staff up there who've also had some training. And solicitors as well, in town, who're quite good and if they get somebody in you know wanting to apply for an injunction that's (sic) not had any involvement with the police at all – quite often I get referrals from solicitors, you know, they explain [to] a client that there is a domestic violence officer et cetera and what you know they may be able to do to help. And quite often solicitors ring from their office while the client's there to arrange an appointment for them. But to a lesser extent than the main four that I've said..." (Interviewee 18)
>
> "...Well we liaise with quite a lot of agencies. I mean we have to. We sort of do advocacy work so we approach the obvious agencies like housing, DSS, welfare you know, welfare rights. But we also have to work alongside you know social services, education welfare officers, doctors, health visitors – we have quite a lot of involvement through other agencies, certainly locally in our area. And also through you know social services, health – we receive quite a few referrals from them...and each person that approaches us, you know, although they're presenting, the problem might be domestic abuse, quite often there's lots of other issues below that and other things to deal with. So we sort of, we maintain contact with quite a lot of other agencies in the area..." (Interviewee 26).
>
> "...[Sometimes] there are other presenting issues where there are more qualified or experienced staff that it would be appropriate to deal with. Or it may be that particular women that we're working with may need co-work from other organizations. It's not that we can be all embracing and say 'oh we're every specific issue that a person presents with'. So we might you know we may make contact with other organizations within Steelsite, with the, obviously, with the woman's consent, to discuss co-work et cetera...there's the refuges, hostels and the voluntary sector. There's, there might be drugs projects, Steelsite alcohol advisory service, we might want to contact some of the housing agencies (but to my knowledge we haven't at this point, but). There's the young single homeless project. Places like that, to CABs you know – I have a joint meeting tomorrow with a CAB worker to do a home visit..." (Interviewee 39).

[123] Here, interviews were asked about their service provision and then asked "...and in providing those services do you need assistance from another agency or organization?...". If they answered yes, there were asked who they needed assistance from.

This is not to suggest that service provision in *each* agency and organization appeared to be collaborative. Some agencies and organizations were clearly lone service providers:

Researcher: "...In terms of th[e] services you're providing...can you do those on your own, do you feel, as an agency? Do you need assistance from another agency?..."

Interviewee: "...Not to provide an empty house no – that's what we do..."

And:

Interviewee: "... we don't have to go to anyone else to find a property because we've got enough of those of our own..." (Interviewee 38).

Researcher: "...Do you think you can [provide the services you're providing] on your own, as an agency?

Interviewee: "...We do do.

Researcher: "...You do do?

Interviewee: "...I'm not sure what you mean?

Researcher: "...Do you think that, in order to provide the services that you're wanting to provide, that you need help from any other agency?

Interviewee: "...It would be good to have other agencies working with us in terms of the [perpetrators'] group... But yes we can provide it. We've got both the skills and the training and the staff time to do that..." (Interviewee Five).

What about individual attendees? Were they collaborative? Specifically, did they collaborate with other individual attendees?

Most did not – these attendees did not contact each other outside initiative meetings about service provision:

Researcher: "...So how often would you say that you work with, speak to, liaise with other Topic Groups participants on a, say, weekly basis?

Interviewee: "...No not at all. I meet up with one of the other, the probation officer, because we're both on the same subgroup of the ACPC [Area Child Protection Committee]. But none of the others, I don't come into contact with any of the others..." (Interviewee One).

Researcher: "...So, on the whole, then, would you say that [the] people you work with the most are members of the Topic Group or not?..."

Interviewee: "...They're not. I don't think I've come into contact with one of them..." (Interviewee Five).

Researcher: "...How often do you work with other members of the Topic Group on, say, a weekly basis?..."

Interviewee: "...It depends what's going on. I would say I'm in contact with somebody on the Topic Group at least once or a couple of times a week..."

Researcher: "...Is that to do with the workings of the Topic Group or is that to do with a particular case?..."

Interviewee: "...I don't particularly get involved in individual cases..." (Interviewee Nine).

Researcher: "...Do you ever work with other [SDV] Forum participants and is that working ever regarding a particular case?..."

Interviewee: "...I don't do case work, no – I supervise or manage people doing case work..." (Interviewee 40).

Researcher: "...Do you ever work with anyone from the Forum regarding a particular case..."

Interviewee: "...Not generally, I don't generally get involved in case work, no. But if [another attendee was] having problems progressing something within Housing – I've given advice as to how they should do that and I might talk to the people who are progressing it. But that's fairly rare because the [Housing] policy is fairly straightforward – we will re-house them basically. So not generally on a case work level...." (Interviewee 38).

Some, though, did collaborate with other attendees – these attendees did contact each other outside initiative meetings about service provision:

Researcher: "...How often would you say you work with Topic Group participants on, for example, a weekly basis?..."

Interviewee: "...It depends, I can't say. I would say that I am speaking to them probably two or three times a week, depending on clients, depending on their needs. I will go a week without speaking to any of them and then the next week I might be ringing somebody up all the time, I mean, I ring the Helpline virtually daily..." (Interviewee Two).

Others were uncertain about their collaboration around service provision – possibly, they contacted each other:

Researcher: "...Do you ever work with representatives of agencies and organizations who attend the [SDV] Forum?

Interviewee: "...I probably do! I probably do, yes. But, you know, but, I mean, I wouldn't, I wouldn't have identified them from that..." (Interviewee 36).

Others were collaborative, but not with other initiative attendees:

Researcher: "...How often would you say you worked with other Topic Group participants on, say, a weekly basis?..."

Interviewee: "...Once or twice a week I get in touch with people from the Topic Group..."

Researcher: "...Is that working to do with a particular case?..."

Interviewee: "...[Yes]. Today I've made two connections, just today, with people from the Topic Group... And then I've been...working with people from the Women's Project... I've said twice a week, it's a lot more than twice a week that I deal with other agencies, but I'm thinking specifically from the Topic Group...".

The interview continues:

Researcher: "...So that's generally with the Topic Group participants or with representatives of that agency?

Interviewee: "...Representatives of that agency, [which] would have a representative at the Topic Group...".

Subsequently:

Researcher: "...So, we've hinted at this, but would you say that the people you work with the most often are members of the Topic Group or not?

Interviewee: "...Their agencies are members of the Topic Group. I'm not saying the person themselves. But their agencies are, yes..." (Interviewee Eight).

Researcher: "...Do you ever work with other Topic Group participants?

Interviewee: "...We work with the Refuge, obviously. I visit the Refuge to see the ladies who're in, to offer them any advice that they want or, sometimes, actually, I just go down for a chat with them, just a friendly chat and see the kiddies and that. So yes, I would say that I have...contact with them. And also with our local domestic violence the voluntary people down on [Name] Road. If I've got somebody [and] if they don't want to speak to me, I will pass them onto them or if they've got any

concerns regarding somebody they will ask them to ring me. So yes we do, we'll meet apart from, you know, when we're on the committees.

Researcher: "...Would that liaison be with the actual person who sits on the Topic Group or would it be with another...?

Interviewee: "...It's usually with somebody else..." (Interviewee 13).

Researcher: "...When you work with other organizations, do you work with the individual who attends the [SDV] Forum or do you work with another representative of that agency?

Interviewee: "...We work with whoever we manage to contact at the time. For example, if we get a referral from, I don't know, Victim Support, it wouldn't automatically be someone that I'd met at the Forum – it could be anyone. Equally, if I was to 'phone up another organization I wouldn't specifically ask for someone I'd met at the Forum – I would speak with any colleague of theirs. Because, generally, my experience is that if someone is attending the Forum in the majority of cases it's from an organizational perspective not just an individual perspective. And so they would, should, would be embracing very similar views and work patterns..." (Interviewee 39).

Research interviewees were questioned about their collaboration and their contacts outside the meeting setting:

Researcher: "...So, do you know whether those people you work with are also members of the [Pittplace] *Multi-Agency Forum*?..."

Interviewee: "...Yes, they certainly are because I met them there..."

Researcher: "...You met them there did you?..."

Interviewee: "...Oh yes...".

This interviewee explained, though, that:

"...I was referring onto the Domestic Violence Officer two years before I went to the Domestic Violence Forum. So that hasn't changed things. My membership of the (well, I don't know whether I'm a member, but) my attendance has actually not made my job any easier – or more complicated. It hasn't changed things..." (Interviewee 20).

Questioned about the Project's 'working relationships', an Alpha Domestic Violence Project interviewee said:

"...I know my own experience has been that I've been able to link up with the SWWOP [Steelsite Working Women's Opportunity Project], Omega Refuge, the Women's Aid refuge, Asian Women's Refuge through Forum organized events. And a lot of the other is just my basic past work experience, I guess, of knowing what resources should be available in a City and actually seeking out and getting myself along. In my induction I basically took myself to every agency I could think of that would be pertinent to the work we do. And made those links directly – some of which we were already working with and others which we've built stronger ties with..." (Interviewee 39).

Likewise:

Researcher: "...So you've mentioned the organisations with whom you tend to work – how did you become involved with those organisations, where did you meet them?

Interviewee: "...Basically, I made all the effort – I phoned them and set up meetings. So you know I set up meetings with social services, different teams in social services, at appropriate times. I set up a meeting with the child and family therapy team for us to go and visit them. And a social worker came to visit us as well. And with schools, it's been a school-by-school thing as the needs arise. I, you know, did, actually, initially do a mailing to most of the junior and infant schools in the region. But, since then, it's very much been on a school-by-school basis..." (Interviewee 36).

A police DVO said:

Researcher: "...So how did you become involved with the people that you work with?

Interviewee: "...How I've met people on the way is at case conferences, at, you know, if I've spoken to a victim, if they've already had some involvement with social services or they've already got a social worker allocated or, you know, a CPN or whatever. And it's just sort of, as time's gone along obviously I've met people through that really, through the victim really. As well as attending all the things, all the meetings and Forums that I go to ..." (Interviewee 18).

A solicitor said:

Researcher: "...Do women tend to approach you or do they come via referrals?

Interviewee: "...A lot of people come off the street, just because of where we are - it's a good location. And, but equally I would say, probably less than half, but we do get referrals from various organizations - some of them [SDV] Forum members, others not. And that's quite good and I think that's because I've been doing it for a while that people know who I am.

Researcher: "...Which organizations tend to refer to you?

Interviewee: "...I do get quite a few from the police. I do get some from refuges and some from council people. And also from, sometimes funny places like the Cathedral seems to recommend me to some people – I don't know quite why, but I do get some referrals from there and just, you know, sometimes doctors and things and I'm not quite sure how they know that. We do get some funny referrals sometimes..." (Interviewee 30).

Finally:

Researcher: "...Have you met anyone with whom you work at the [SDV] Forum at all?..."

Interviewee: "...You mean somebody that we might work with on an individual case?..."

Researcher: "...Yes..."

Interviewee: "...No. I mean, I would see that as kind of problematic because of confidentiality, anyway. I wouldn't. That would, to me, only be coincidental if I met somebody at the Forum who was also working with a client. But I wouldn't use that as a root in because I wouldn't be discussing clients at the Forum. It would happen the other way around – if I coincidentally got to know somebody and then saw them at the Forum...." (Interviewee 23).

Clearly, some interesting issues are raised here about attending agencies', organizations' and individuals' collaboration and contacts outside the meeting setting in Pittplace and Steelsite. These issues are further examined in Chapter Six.

A Final Word About Service Provision.

Since this research has focused on collaborative approaches around domestic violence, most research interviews centred on collaboration in service provision, rather than on service provision per se. Nonetheless, both research observations and these research interviews raise interesting points about service provision on domestic violence in Pittplace and Steelsite. Two especially interesting points are raised. The first point raised is that agencies whose service provision on domestic violence has traditionally been questionable tried hard throughout the research period to emphasize that their service provision is increasingly interventionist – that it is *better*. The second point raised centres on *gender* and questions about whether domestic violence is a gendered crime or not.

Perhaps police service provision on domestic violence has traditionally been the most questionable. Unsurprisingly, then, Hillshire Police appeared to be especially keen to emphasize their interventionist responses in domestic violence. Both research observations and research interviews suggested these efforts.

Readers might remember the March 2000 SDVF presentation on a Steelsite based Special Abuse Unit. Here, police attendees told other attendees that "...the police have come a long way..." (SDVF 23.3.00.) in policing domestic violence. On other occasions, police attendees made similar pronouncements. Certainly, in both the March 1999 and May 1999 PDVTG meetings, a DVO explained that Hillshire Police in one division use Polaroid cameras in domestic violence and, in the June 1999 SDVF meeting, police attendees announced that arrests were "...up 25%..." (SDVF Minutes 17.6.99.) in one Hillshire Police division.

Also, a Divisional Commander attended a PMADVF meeting (January 2000) and, throughout, emphasized Hillshire Police's interventionist responses. Concern had been expressed in another Forum meeting that the Hillshire Police's definition of domestic violence had changed. First, then, a police DVO and the Divisional Commander reassured attendees that Hillshire Police's definition for recording domestic violence had changed *only* because the government's definition of domestic violence had changed[124]. The Divisional Commander explained that the police would use another definition[125] for general purposes in Hillshire because Hillshire Police were concerned about the government's new definition, which was "...at best misleading, at worst something else..." (PMADVF 11.1.00.) in how it might suggest that the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence had reduced. The Divisional Commander then discussed a new Hillshire police domestic violence policy on domestic violence, explaining that it is grounded in positive policing on domestic violence – that it encourages police to take positive action, usually arrest, and discourages mediation or reconciliation – and that it seeks to change "...the hearts and minds of officers..." (PMADVF 11.1.00.). Throughout the meeting, the DVO and the Divisional Commander stressed that the new policy is grounded in interventionist policing on domestic violence.

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[124] From 1 April 1999 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary has used a revised definition for the purposes of the returns of reported incidents which it requires from police forces – "...the term 'domestic violence' shall be understood to mean any violence between current or former partners in an intimate relationship, wherever and whenever the violence occurs. The violence may include physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse..." (Home Office 2000). The revision is in the restriction of domestic violence in this definition to 'intimate relationships'

[125] See Footnote 109.

Then, attendees put questions to the Divisional Commander. Her answers were notably reassuring. So, the Chair mentioned concerns, expressed in another meeting, about DVO workloads. The Divisional Commander's answer was that, in her division, an Inspector would take over from a Sergeant to head the organizational department in which DVOs were based[126]. The Women and Children's Refuge representative asked whether domestic violence was prioritized in police policy circles – the Divisional Commander answered that such commitment had, indeed, been expressed in a recent police domestic violence conference she had attended. Finally, the DVO and the Divisional Commander emphasized the "...close links..." (PMADVF 11.1.00.) in Pittplace between DVOs and organizations like the Women and Children's Refuge; the Domestic Violence Group/Helpline; and the PMADVF, saying that police responses to domestic violence could be "...boosted..." through "...working together..." (PMADVF 11.1.00.).

Hillshire Police interviewees also tried hard to emphasize their interventionist service provision. Throughout a research interview, the Hillshire Police Chief Constable stressed the police's no-nonsense approach to domestic violence:

> "...it's a sad story that domestic violence has been around as long as there's [been] people, but it's just that the culture has changed around it – the only way was to grin and bear it, stiff upper lip, and all the rest of it towards one now where, *quite properly*, it shouldn't be tolerated. And you build on that, other measures where we look now at getting people very quickly before the court so the opportunity for a rethink of supporting a complaint is less likely (because the action's been taken before the mind can be changed)..."

Subsequently:

> "...From my perspective domestic violence is one of my force priorities..." (Interviewee 45. Italics Supplied).

Likewise, a Divisional Commander said:

> "...In the past it's been 'oh it's just a domestic', you know. You go there and you tell them to patch themselves up and if you can't patch yourselves up go see a solicitor – I've done it – did it 20 odd years ago. Now, we are far more pro-active and officers are far better trained and more aware of any potential problems. And quite rightly so. Because 80% of the murders in the country are domestic related. So bad domestics end up in murders. And, to prevent that happening, an early intervention is what is needed..." (Interviewee 48).

A DVO based in Steelsite described Hillshire Police's interventionist approach:

> "...It's a three-tiered approach where we attend and give advice and then we have to step it up if things pursue. Then we have to step it up [again] – letters are sent out, not only to the victim but also the perpetrator. And then, that follows onto arrest. And obviously to the courts..." (Interviewee 31).

A DVO based in Pittplace said:

> "...I joined 23 years ago (the police) and, I mean, I've got to stick my hand up and say it was classed as, when I was out on the beat, 'oh it's only another domestic'. But that was 23 years ago

[126] Incidentally, the Forum meeting was the first time a DVO based in the department and attending the Forum had heard about this change.

> and things are changing. And I've got to say, yes people do look at it differently...whereas perhaps domestic violence was at the bottom of the ladder it's now gradually going up and they are realising that it has a lot of other implications than just a domestic...it's taken a long time. But it's, it is, you know, [changing]. And I've been as guilty as the next for saying 'oh it's just a domestic'. But you don't realise what that woman is going through..." (Interviewee 13).

Interestingly, some police interviewees were less certain that 'it's just a domestic' notions no longer characterize police thinking. Describing her experience training police probationers, one DVO said:

> "...It saddens me. Because at 18 months they're [police probationers] already picking up the attitudes of 'oh it's just a domestic'; 'oh she'll withdraw it'; 'she'll not go to court'..." (Interviewee Two).

Further, whether or not police thinking in Hillshire is more interventionist, we cannot be sure whether this thinking is translated into practice. Essentially, because no Hillshire women were interviewed in the research, we cannot be sure that the Hillshire Police's interventionist message, heard in research observations and interviews was not just *rhetoric*. Indeed, on the one hand, readers might remember concerns voiced in both Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives about problems that persist in police responses to domestic violence (see especially, October 1999 and July 2000 PMADVFs and March 2000 SDVF). On the other hand, more than one research interviews *did* comment that the police appeared more "...enlightened..." (Interviewee Six) on domestic violence.

Notwithstanding whether or not Hillshire Police *were* interventionist, the point remains that they *said* they were – that research observations and interviews highlight Hillshire Police's keenness to emphasize their interventionist responses in domestic violence.

The second interesting point that research observations and interviews raise about service provision in domestic violence in Pittplace and Steelsite centres on *gender* and questions about whether domestic violence is a gendered crime or not. Marked differences were seen on this question between the two research areas, Pittplace and Steelsite. These differences were largely seen through research interviews. As mentioned, no initiative really discussed domestic violence in the research period so research observations in the meeting setting suggest little on the gender question. But marked differences were seen in research interviews conducted in domestic violence organizations in Pittplace and Steelsite.

As mentioned, one focus group interview was conducted with (unfortunately, just two) Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline volunteers. During the focus group discussion, it became obvious that these volunteers were most upset that the researcher's approach was/is that domestic violence centres on men's abuse of women (i.e. is gender specific). For a long time in the discussion, both volunteers encouraged

the researcher to realize that domestic violence is *not* gender based (i.e. is a gender-neutral offence) and, more, that men's domestic violence victimization is both serious and significant. This encouragement started on a question about multi-agency liaison:

Researcher: "...Would you hope to meet other people at the [PMADV] Forum or do you think you know people who you need to deal with when you're proving services to women?

Volunteer 1: "...Can we include men? Because it is important to include men..."

Volunteer 2: "...Yes..."

Researcher: "...I suppose I should have made it clear at the beginning – I'm very much, on the, my research has been really looking at women as, you know, victims. But I do acknowledge that men do suffer. But my, I just tend to feel that men are..."

Volunteer 1: "...Are the perpetrators..."

Researcher: "...Yes..."

Volunteer 1: "...But they're not..."

Researcher: "...Do you think that men are at equal risk of victimisation then?..."

Volunteer 2: "...Yes..."

Researcher: "... Do you?..."

Volunteer 1: "...Yes..."

Volunteer 2: "...Yes..."

Volunteer 2: "...I have heard a man..."

Volunteer 1: "...You actually got a call didn't you Volunteer 2?..."

Volunteer 2: "...Yes, yes..."

Volunteer 2 then discusses this call, concluding that "...men are victims too...". Subsequently:

Researcher: "...Do you get a lot of men calling up then?

Volunteer 1: "...Hopefully we're going to start. But we have had men in the past haven't we Volunteer 2?..." One phoned you didn't he and he said I don't want to talk to you you're a woman, you don't understand..."

After a short conversation about women telephoning Volunteer 1 (a man), the discussion continued:

Researcher: "...You know when men phone up? Is it the same sort of abuse that they suffer?..."

Volunteer 2: "...Oh yes, yes..."

Researcher: "... So high levels of violence?..."

Volunteer 1: "...Yes, because don't forget that women go through this Pre-Menstrual Tension and that sort of thing...and women, yes, they do take it out on their husbands. Because they might be at home and they're looking after the children (and the stresses of bringing up the child) it's not easy...and they've got to take it out on somebody..."

Subsequently, discussing women's controlling behaviours on men, Volunteer 2 continues that women's behaviours are:

Volunteer 2: "...Just as physically violent. In fact, I think in some ways the injuries are worse because they haven't the strength that a man has (obviously!!) and they tend, if a row blows up and, a woman's place – in the kitchen, usually, you know, she'll pick up a knife or some sort of instrument to hit the man with – I have had a man with a broken collar bone and previous injuries (a broken arm and a broken nose). Never reported it to the police..."

Researcher: "...Do you think that other organizations in Pittplace have the same opinion about that gender situation – do you think that other organizations see women as the main victims and men as the perpetrators?..."

Volunteer 1: "...Yeah, it's not just Pittplace – it's the whole of Hillshire....it's sociologists. Men are sociologically believed to be the perpetrators – the bullies. Women are still believed to be the weaker sex. But there's been such a lot of change over the last two decades that it no longer rings true..."

Volunteers 1 and 2 concluded that women and men's domestic violence victimization is not '50:50' but is '75:25' (women:men). Volunteer 2 said, though, that "...I think other people don't realise..." about men's victimisation. Volunteer 2 continued that the Pittplace Group/Helpline realized because "...we're in contact with the victims...". Finally, questioned about whether the Group/Helpline tries to get this realization across to people in other organizations, Volunteer 1 said that "...I raise this whenever I attend a meeting...".

The commitment to a gender neutral position on domestic violence that Volunteers 1 and 2 espoused here was not, though, shared by interviewees in domestic violence organizations in Steelsite. None appeared keen to 'include men':

Researcher: "...So what is the Beta Domestic Violence Project?..."

Interviewee: "...Well, basically it provides a service, the main thing it started with was the Helpline, which was to help women who either were in a violent situation or actually were you know wanting to get out of it or just simply needed to talk about their situation. And some women have actually come out of that situation to go into support. So the aim of it is to provide support for the women through women's support workers. And since it's started it's also brought in myself and another worker as children's workers and we try to provide some help for the women's children if the women feel they'd like that..." (Interviewee 35).

Researcher: "...So what is the Beta Domestic Violence Project?..."

Interviewee: "...OK. It's a community based and geographically based organisation, community based organisation that helps women that have suffered from or who are suffering from domestic violence in some form..." (Interviewee 36).

Researcher: "...So could you just tell me what the Alpha Domestic Violence Project is please?..."

Interviewee: "...It's a project that offers support to women who are either in abusive relationships, want to leave abusive relationships or have left abusive relationships...we offer helpline support, we offer one to one support with women (that can be emotional support, it can be support around practical issues like benefits, housing, etc). We accompany women to court of they ask for it. We also run a support group..." (Interviewee 23).

Researcher: "...OK, so could you just outline for me what the Alpha Domestic Violence Project is please?..."

Interviewee: "...Our main objectives are to be working with women specifically around the issues of domestic abuse. Women who are either experiencing domestic abuse; or have moved out of that situation; or who're wanting to give consideration to moving out of it; or to working towards a better environment, whilst at that time not feeling ready to move away..." (Interviewee 39).

Researcher: "...OK, so could you just outline for me what the Steelsite Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling service is please?..."

Interviewee "...OK, we provide telephone and face to face counselling to women who have experienced rape and sexual abuse, and that's recently or in the past...we prioritize black women..." (Interviewee 24).

Just one organization in Steelsite supports men as victims – the Gamma Domestic Violence Project:

Researcher: "...So first of all, what is the Gamma Domestic Violence Project?..."

Interviewee: "...Right, it's a community based project that supports anyone that's experienced domestic abuse. So we support men and women and children..." (Interviewee 26).

Interestingly, though, Interviewee 26 did not seem as keen as the Pittplace Group/Helpline volunteers had been to encourage that men's domestic violence victimization be seen as serious and significant. Discussing the SDVF's support, Interviewee 26 mentions that the Gamma Project was alone in responding to men. She continues:

"...we're the only project that supports men that have experienced domestic violence – I mean we don't support perpetrators by any means, but we do, I mean, overwhelmingly it's women [who] we accept..."

She continues:

"...But I mean, nationally, Women's Aid always recognized that men do experience domestic abuse. But they're not the agency that deal with it. And it is overwhelmingly women. And, I mean, I agree with that and this Project does..." (Interviewee 26).

One might go as far as to suggest that, rather than being keen to espouse gender-neutrality, Interviewee 26 seemed rather defensive here? Certainly, one could not imagine Interviewee 26 raising the gender question 'whenever she attended a meeting'.

Concluding these findings about Pittplace and Steelsite agencies' service provision, numerous interesting points were raised. One main point about such service provision was that, sometimes, it was collaborative. Other times, though, agencies and organizations were lone service providers. Another main point was that most individual attendees did not contact each other outside Pittplace and Steelsite meetings about service provision. Two interesting points about agencies' service provision per se, not just their collaborative provision, were raised. First, both research observations and interviews suggest that agencies, especially Hillshire Police, whose service provision on domestic violence has traditionally been questionable tried hard throughout the research period to emphasize that their service provision is getting better. Secondly, though most domestic violence organizations in Steelsite had maintained a gendered approach in domestic violence, some in Pittplace had come to see domestic violence as gender neutral. Each point raised here is picked up in Chapter Six.

7. Conclusion.

Chapter Five has set out the main research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite. These findings were seen through both research observations and interviews. The research findings were presented under five main headings. As the Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives researched were discussed, we saw that the initiatives had differing aims and objectives and that there were numerous structural differences between them. The structural differences between the initiatives suggested, as other research has suggested, that there is no multi-agency model.

Numerous interesting research findings were seen about attendance on the initiatives researched. Although attendance in each initiative differed in the research period, no other differences were seen – the same things were found in each initiative researched. Three main research findings were seen about attendance in Pittplace and Steelsite. First, that some agencies and organizations appeared not to see their attendance as needed on the initiatives researched or in some initiative meetings, and also appeared to see it as acceptable that just certain departments and sections attended the initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite. Secondly, in each initiative researched, attendance seemed as much about individual concern as agency commitment. Some attendees attended or had attended as 'enthusiasts'. Only some agencies and organizations had one established attendee and interested individuals attended as they pleased or as they considered attendance 'appropriate', 'valuable' or 'helpful'. Some were able to tailor their work around domestic violence and so attend the initiatives. Others described themselves as 'champions' and others discussed their attendance as based on an interest in domestic violence. Only some attended the initiatives because they had to. Thirdly, in the research period, the initiatives researched did not, as initiatives, talk *with* women who had or who were experiencing domestic violence since no abused women attended meetings in the research period *as* abused women.

Other interesting research findings were seen about discussions in the initiatives researched. Readers might remember that much PDVTG discussion centred on the Group's objectives and the Group seemed unable or unwilling to move beyond discussing its objectives. Further, throughout the research period, it seemed that issues like domestic violence service provision and the issue of domestic violence were marginalized as time and again PDVTG discussion reverted to the Group's objectives or the other issues set out earlier – it did not discuss domestic violence. Although sometimes seeming to be no more than chatting, much PMADVF discussion did centre

on domestic violence. The Forum discussed domestic violence, domestic violence service provision *and* how women experience that provision throughout the research period. As such, the Pittplace Forum maintained a solid connection to the issue and did not marginalize domestic violence as the PDVTG did. Finally, throughout the research period, the SDVF Full Forum discussed certain standard issues. The Forum did not discuss domestic violence or domestic violence service provision. Sometimes the Forum hosted presentations on attending agencies' service provision but other presentations were more about women's issues. Even in those presentations on service provision, the Forum had little discussion on how women experience that provision. Probably the Forum did not discuss domestic violence and domestic violence service provision because it spent too much time discussing its work priorities. Finally, there appeared little disagreement and no difficult situations in the initiatives researched. Before and after the meetings observed, attendees sometimes engaged in discussions/gossiping and it was clear that some (usually the same) attendees were talking to each other outside the meeting setting.

Perhaps the main point about the initiative's main outputs was that no initiative researched was a 'talking shop' – each had outputs that centred on more than joint talking. One main point about the PDVTG's outputs was that, though it achieved just one of its objectives in the research period, it seemed keen to tick off its objectives as achieved. Another main point was that it seemed a PDVTG objective, the planned additional refuge in Pittplace, had been used to realize a personal goal. A main point about the SDVF's outputs was that the enforceability of the Forum's multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse seemed questionable. Another important point was that the SDVF had an output that the SSSG had determined – it bidded to the Home Office's CRP because the SSSG told it to. Finally, not all attendees supported the SDVF's outputs. Readers might remember that one interviewee was 'quite annoyed' that the SDVF planned to found another community support organization but did not support 'groups that are here now and need that support'.

One main point about Pittplace and Steelsite agencies' service provision was that, although some agencies were lone service providers, numerous others were collaborative. Another main point, though, was that most individual attendees did not contact each other outside Pittplace and Steelsite meetings about service provision. An interesting point raised about agencies' service provision per se was that both research observations and interviews suggested that agencies whose service provision on

domestic violence has traditionally been questionable tried hard throughout the research period to emphasize that their service provision is getting better. Another point about service provision per se was seen through research interviews, the point being that, though most domestic violence organizations in Steelsite had maintained a gendered approach in domestic violence, some in Pittplace had come to see domestic violence as gender neutral.

Some research findings set out here are not picked up in Chapter Six. An obvious finding about attendance on the Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives researched that is not picked up in Chapter Six is that changing attendance meeting-to-meeting and as individuals stopped attending and others took their place characterized the initiatives researched. Some findings about discussions in Pittplace and Steelsite set out here are also not picked up in Chapter Six. Findings about inclusive language used in Pittplace around the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (classic corporatism?); about 'formal and stilted' language used in the SDVF, suggesting that 'understanding' is a 'filter for inclusion'; about differing opinions on seniority in Pittplace and Steelsite; about certain meetings being 'intimidating' and 'alienating'; and about there being no 'difficult situations' in the initiatives researched come to mind here. Perhaps the most obvious point not picked up *fully* in Chapter Six about each initiative's outputs centres on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The point being that each initiative had outputs on or that happened because of each area's crime and disorder processes – the bigger point being that each had such outputs *regardless of* whether they were committed to such processes.

That these findings and points are not picked up in Chapter Six is not to suggest that they are unimportant or might not become more important in time. Certainly, on the second issue, given that, in their review of audits and strategies produced by statutory partnerships in 1999, Phillips et al. found that "...the most commonly cited crime issue, specified in 86% of the strategies was domestic violence..." (2000: 1)[127], it is possible (probable?) that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives' outputs will *increasingly* be crime and disorder centred and, so, the findings in Pittplace and Steelsite about crime and disorder will become increasingly important.

On the first issue, each finding set out here, whether or not it is picked up in Chapter Six, *is* important. Clearly, some findings are more *surprising* than others. The point that most good attendees in the initiatives researched were voluntary sector

[127] See Chapter Two.

organizations seems odd on a common sense basis. Such organizations are under-funded – "...while Women's Aid and the refuge network as a whole does its best to provide responsive and empowering services for abused women and their children, the whole enterprise is hampered by inadequate funding and poor resources..." (Hague and Malos 1998: 47). The under-resourcing of domestic violence organizations means their attendance is problematic[128] – attendance may leave a helpline un-staffed or an organization's service closed (see Interviewee 24's interview). Attendance on initiatives is also problematic for domestic violence organizations because they provide 'crisis' services. The finding that these organizations were the 'best' attendees on the initiatives researched is, then, surprising.

Further, some findings raise greater concerns than others. The point that the initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite did not discuss domestic violence raises much concern (and is, also, rather surprising). Domestic violence has been so long hidden and, as seen in Chapter Two, traditional responses to women and their children have been grounded in approaches that have minimised and denied the violence and abuse. The point that the initiatives did not discuss domestic violence is concerning, not least because it leads one to wonder whether the same avoidance processes are going on in partnership approaches too.

Concern also surrounds the points on gender-neutrality, raised in discussions about agencies' service provision per se. Clearly, service provision in some organizations is no longer grounded in the principles that underpinned the development of the battered women's movement and that have served as foundations stones for the refuge movement. The refuge movement has been about both "...supporting women subjected to male violence..." and about "...rejecting patriarchal control of women..." (Dobash and Dobash 1992: 63). Clearly, one might question that organizations assuming a gender-neutral position on domestic violence are grounded in such feminist understandings about domestic violence and about responses to women and their children. Research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite raise concerns since they suggest that services are being provided in some areas and in some organizations that are not in the mould of the pioneering services that have characterised the women's movement.

[128] That domestic violence organizations are under-resourced is, itself, an issue. Certainly, Women's Aid has recommended, inter alia, that "...funding of existing local refuge and ancillary support services should be urgently secured. Existing mechanisms for funding must be co-ordinated and rationalised. Resources should be ring-fenced by central government for maintaining the existing network of refuges and developing new services..." (Women's Aid 1998: 5).

So, each point set out here, whether or not it is picked up in Chapter Six, is important and some points are certainly both more surprising and more concerning than others. Because the research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite have been set out thoroughly here, the surprising and concerning points, and those findings that centre on important differences from and likenesses to findings in other research can, having been introduced here, be picked up again outside this thesis. Indeed, Chapter Five has set out the main findings of the *research* in Pittplace and Steelsite – points that do not carry through the thesis can be picked up again as the research is discussed again in other publications. A main aim in the research and the thesis has been to increase understandings about partnership approaches. Through setting out the research findings in a thorough fashion and including those points that do not carry through, Chapter Five has assumed an important role in furthering this aim.

Another research aim, though, has been to examine whether collective action on domestic violence has made any difference and a main aim in the thesis has been to argue that such approaches have, in truth, made little difference. Chapter Five has also set out the main findings that construct this argument. By setting out certain research findings that are picked up in Chapter Six, the Chapter is important in furthering this other aim.

We can now move to see how the research findings set out here are picked up in Chapter Six.

Chapter Six – A Themed Discussion.

1. Introduction.

The literature on multi-agency approaches to crime prevention and domestic violence highlighted four main themes – attendance, structures, outcomes and power. These themes provided a base around which the researcher's questions on multi-agency approaches to domestic violence were organized. The main findings in Pittplace and Steelsite appear also to centre on these four themes. The findings centre on these themes because issues are raised under each theme that lead to a main conclusion about multi-agency approaches to domestic violence in Pittplace and Steelsite – that multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence are not making women and children safer.

The issues raised under each theme lead to this main conclusion because each suggests that there was a *disconnection* between the multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite and service provision on domestic violence. Each issue suggests either a disconnection in *practice*, a *perceived* disconnection or a *caused* disconnection. How these disconnections lead to the main conclusion that multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence are not making women and children safer is examined in Chapter Seven.

Sometimes, issues raised under each theme are different to issues raised under the same theme in the literature. Other times, issues raised under each theme raise points that differ from points raised under the same theme in the literature. Though interesting, these differences are not examined here – some are set out but they are not fully examined[129]. Rather, examination focuses on the issues raised under each theme that lead us to the main conclusion. As such, this Chapter aims to construct the researcher's central argument – that research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite raise issues that lead us to conclude that these initiatives are not making women and children safer.

As each issue that leads to the main conclusion is discussed, readers are reminded of the research finding in Pittplace and Steelsite, before the finding is compared to past research. The findings are compared such because a main aim in the research is to increase understandings about partnership approaches. The comparisons enable the research in Pittplace and Steelsite to find a location in the literature. Possible explanations for and reflections on the issue are then given. Finally, how each issue

[129] The word limit that is imposed on this thesis means that such differences cannot be examined here. They will, though, be examined in the researcher's other publications.

suggests a disconnection in *practice*, a *perceived* disconnection or a *caused* disconnection is set out.

The first theme is attendance.

2. Attendance in Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Approaches.

Main findings in Pittplace and Steelsite appear to centre on the theme, attendance. Attendance is a theme because, reflecting on who attended the multi-agency initiatives researched and when they attended these initiatives, two main conclusions are reached. First, that there was a disconnection *in practice* between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence and, secondly, that there was a *perceived* disconnection between the initiatives and service provision.

How are these conclusions reached?

First, two issues are important – that some individual attendees were specialists in domestic violence but some were not and that no abused women attended the initiatives researched in Pittplace and Steelsite.

Specialist Attendees.

Attendees on Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives included both specialists in domestic violence *and* those encountering domestic violence within much broader service provision. This compares to past research – Hague et al. found that attendees included both "...those who specialise in the issue (eg, Women's Aid) and those for which (sic) domestic violence forms only a small percentage of their duties (eg, the police and social services)..." (1996: 23).

Research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite also suggest that some *individual* attendees were specialists in domestic violence but some were not. Both practitioners and managers attended the initiatives researched. As such, some attendees encountered domestic violence day-to-day as they undertook service provision in their agencies and organizations. Others did not, since they did not undertake service provision, on domestic violence or otherwise. So, some attendees were service providers but some were service planners – some were domestic violence specialists but some were not.

Again, this seems consistent with past research. Indeed, Hague and colleagues found that some initiatives researched comprised both community practitioners and management attendees and, in the North-East, Lewis found that "...most of the region's

Forums have representatives at both senior management and practitioner level..." (1998: 14).

This issue is important because it leads to the conclusion that there was a disconnection between multi-agency *initiatives* on domestic violence in Pittplace and Steelsite and *service provision* on domestic violence. The issue that some individuals attending multi-agency domestic violence initiatives do not service provide means that the initiatives *were* disconnected from agencies' service provision – that there was a disconnection *in practice*.

No Abused Women As Attendees.

No abused women attended Pittplace or Steelsite multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in the research period. Some organizational representatives could themselves have been abused women. Assuming that one in four women have experienced an assault from a current or former partner at sometime in their lives[130], it is probable that some had been or were abused women. Nonetheless, none attended *as* abused women. This finding supports past research. Hague and colleagues found that women and children rarely attended such initiatives and Lewis (1998) found comparable non-attendance on North-East England multi-agency initiatives.

This means both that, as mentioned, the initiatives researched did not talk with women who had or who were experiencing domestic violence and also that no 'disorganized' women – women living through domestic violence without refuges or support organizations – attended the initiatives researched. Research in Pittplace and Steelsite, then, supports Crawford's (1999) assertion that inclusion is conditional on 'organization' – that disorganized interests rarely gain inclusion in and so do not gain a voice in partnership initiatives.

The bigger issue, though, is that because no abused women attended the initiatives researched, there was a disconnection between the initiatives and service provision on domestic violence – there was a disconnection *from women* and thus a disconnection in practice.

Reflecting further on who attended the multi-agency initiatives researched and when they attended, numerous issues lead to the conclusion that there was a perceived disconnection between the initiatives and service provision.

How does each issue lead us to conclude that there was such a disconnection?

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[130] See Chapter Two.

Multi-Agency Specialists.

Research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite suggest that attendees on Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives included both specialists in domestic violence and those encountering domestic violence in much broader service provision and that some individual attendees were specialists in domestic violence but some were not. Another research finding here is that many individual attendees on the initiatives researched were specialist *multi-agency people*. Attendance on each initiative researched mirrored attendance on *other* Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives – many individuals attended domestic violence initiatives and initiatives centred on child protection, drug abuse and racial harassment.

Why did Pittplace/Steelsite attendees also attend other multi-agency initiatives? One explanation, as per a research interviewee, is that 'it's [Pittplace] quite a small town'. Secondly, multi-agency approaches are somewhat 'the in thing'. Not only are such approaches propounded in policy discourse – possibly, practitioners cannot avoid attending initiatives on certain issues – but they are propounded in practitioner discourse too. It sometimes seemed in Pittplace and Steelsite that 'if it's not multi-agency, it's not worth doing'. Both Pittplace initiatives certainly discussed multi-agency approaches throughout the research period. Interviewee 41 suggests a third explanation. Readers might remember that Interviewee 41 said that SDVF attendees 'tend to be people I know from other situations, which, that's something about people who are active with things around women'. This third explanation might be considered further since it suggests that some worrying processes characterise attendance on multi-agency initiatives.

First, it suggests a ghettoisation process. Perhaps problem issues are being 'hived off' into multi-agency initiatives that the same people are attending. Perhaps multi-agency initiatives on domestic abuse, racial harassment and drug abuse are coming to be seen as 'social problem' initiatives. Rather than the explanation being that 'it is something about people who are active with things around women', it could be that 'it is something about people who are active with things around *marginalized issues*'.

Secondly, it suggests a feminization process. Perhaps, some issues, and thus multi-agency initiatives focused on them, are coming to be seen as 'women's work'. Again, rather than the explanation being that 'it is something about people who are active with things around women', it could be that 'it is something about *women* who are active'. As mentioned, an interesting finding is that most attendees on the initiatives researched

were women – perhaps initiatives on some issues in Pittplace and Steelsite were being feminized.

Such feminization has been seen in other research. Sampson and colleagues (1991) found that joint child sexual abuse investigations were 'largely done by women' and argue that liaison on this issue became 'feminized' as other liaison was masculinized. Sampson and colleagues' (1991) implication is that 'messy' liaison was feminized while 'fun' (see Reiner 1978, 1992, 1997) liaison was masculinized. Adam Crawford also found such feminization. He suggests that the police deem multi-agency liaison a "...pejorative form of 'women's work'..." (1999: 124). His suggestion (though police centred) is that it is not just *certain* liaison that is feminized, but that *all* liaison is essentially thus.

So, attendees on the Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives researched also attended other multi-agency initiatives. This might be because problem issues are being 'hived off' into multi-agency initiatives that the same people are attending or because of feminization – domestic violence is 'messy' and domestic violence initiatives are feminized *or* because all multi-agency approaches are feminized.

As well as leading us to the broad conclusion that there was a perceived disconnection between the initiatives and service provision, this issue also suggests such a disconnection. The issue that some attendees were multi-agency specialists suggests that there was a perceived disconnection between the initiatives and service provision because it suggests that agencies' attendance on multi-agency domestic violence researched is based more on marginalization than on reasoned examination and questioning about why they are there – attendance being seen as something that *women* do, not something *agencies* do. The issue, then, is that agencies might be 'palming off' attendance on multi-agency domestic violence initiatives to women and not examining why they, as an agency, are there. Clearly, this suggests a perceived disconnection between initiatives and service provision.

The same suggestion is seen in another issue, attendance based on individual concern.

Individual Concern.

A main research finding was that in each initiative researched, attendance seemed as much about individual concern as agency commitment.

Some attendees attended or had attended as 'enthusiasts' the initiatives researched. Only some agencies and organizations had one established attendee and interested

individuals attended as they pleased or as they considered attendance 'appropriate', 'valuable' or 'helpful'. Others, especially middle-managers, were able to tailor their work around domestic violence and so attend the initiatives. Others described themselves as 'champions' and some discussed their attendance on the initiatives researched as based on interest in domestic violence. Finally, only some attended the initiatives because they had to.

Attendance based on individual interest, especially agencies and organization attending as *enthusiasts* or *champions* attend, raises the same issue about attendance as 'multi-agency people'– that it might be that attendance on multi-agency initiatives is seen as something that *champions* do, not seen as something that *agencies* do. Once more, the issue is that agencies might be 'palming off' attendance on initiatives, this time on champions, and not examining why they as an agency are there. Again, this suggests a perceived disconnection.

Bad Attendance.

Another issue that leads us to conclude that there was a perceived disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision centres on bad attendance on these initiatives. Some agencies and organization in Pittplace and Steelsite did not attend the multi-agency initiatives researched. Others were poor attendees on these initiatives. From others, just one department attended but other departments did not. Others sent just some *sections* of some departments to meetings. Each finding compares to past research. Certainly, Ruth Lewis found in North-East England that:

> "...the category least represented on Forums were health related agencies (both statutory and voluntary)...Indeed, respondents reported that there were gaps in representation from several key agencies. These gaps related to a wide variety of agencies but the most commonly mentioned were health workers (Accident and Emergency Departments, GPs and hospital staff); legal personnel (courts, magistrates, solicitors, judges and the CPS); and education professionals..." (1998: 13)[131].

Likewise, on just departmental sections attending initiatives, Audrey Mullender sees that "...some [social services departments] may have begun thinking about its [domestic violence] relevance for child protection *or* for community care, so may send a representative of one or the other of these spheres, but there is rarely an across-the-

[131] See also Sampson (1991), discussed in Chapter Two. Sampson (1991) found that just one agency/organization attended each inter-agency working group meeting of the victim support/crime prevention initiative. One member – the local authority police support unit – attended just two of 18 meetings and other members attended between 15 and three meetings. See also Hague and colleagues', discussed in Chapter Two "...the police and refuge services are the agencies most often involved [in multi-agency initiatives]. Probation, social services and housing are involved significantly less frequently. Of the criminal justice agencies, other criminal justice services, local authority education departments and health services participate considerably less frequently again..." (Hague et al. 1996: 52).

board acknowledgement of its [domestic violence] importance..." (Mullender 1999: 243. Italics Original).

Why did some agencies, organizations and services appear to think that their attendance was not needed on the initiatives researched or in some meetings in Pittplace and Steelsite and, also appeared to think that it was acceptable that certain different departmental sections attended the initiatives?

Readers might remember the research interviews set out in Chapter Five. These interviews suggest three possible explanations.

Unimportance, Uncertainty and Certainty.

The research interviews set out earlier suggest, perhaps unsurprisingly, that a feeling that attending the initiatives researched was *'important'* generally accompanied good attendance, or a hope to 'have more involvement'. The SCC Housing Department interviewee said that it was important that the Housing Department attended the SDVF so that 'other agencies were not sitting there thinking housing don't do anything'. Likewise, a Hillshire Police attendee said that it was 'definitely' important that 'the networking was kept up'. Interviewees in numerous domestic violence organizations also said that it was 'important' to attend the SDVF. One said it was important to 'see what's going on around Steelsite'. Another said it was important 'on a work basis' and also 'on a personal level'. The SRSACS attendee said it was important to attend 'to keep rape on the agenda' and so that 'the voice of the voluntary sector is represented'. With the exception of the SRSACS, each agency and organization here was a good attendee on the initiatives researched.

The interviews set out also suggest, again perhaps unsurprisingly, that a feeling that attendance was not important generally accompanied poor attendance. Interviewees in both the Pittplace Health Authority and the PMBC Education Department said that attendance was not important. The Heath Authority Interviewee said that attendance was important for 'core agencies' but that the Health Authority was 'not peripheral but not one of the core agencies'. Likewise, the Education Department Interviewee said 'we don't really have anything to put into meetings' and ' I don't think we're particularly important to meetings'. Both the Pittplace Health Authority and the PMBC Education Department were bad attendees on the Pittplace initiatives researched.

Whatever, associated with this feeling in bad attendees that attendance on the initiatives researched was not important appeared to be uncertainty, first, on multi-agency

approaches and, secondly, on domestic violence[132]. First, there seemed uncertainty in some circles in Pittplace and Steelsite about what agencies and organizations could take from and what they could give to the initiatives researched. There certainly seemed in education department management circles in both Pittplace and Steelsite uncertainty about 'why they were there'. Perhaps this was because agencies 'palmed off' attendance and did not examine why they as an agency were there?

Whatever, there also seemed, in such circles, uncertainty about just what domestic violence meant to them and their service provision. Perhaps education department management thought that domestic violence was only an education issue vis-à-vis child protection or was not an education issue at all. Certainly, on the child protection point, education representatives on Pittplace/Steelsite initiatives were education welfare officers. On the 'not an education issue at all' point, readers might recall that the Steelsite interviewee remembers her line-manager's criticism as she attended the SDVF. This criticism encouraged her to 'remember her roots' – "...'don't forget who you are and what you're supposed to be doing'..." (Interviewee 29).

So, it seems education department management circles in Pittplace and Steelsite were uncertain on multi-agency approaches – on what they could take from and give to initiatives – and on domestic violence – what domestic violence meant to them and their service provision. Perhaps, these uncertainties were *associated*. Perhaps, because they did not think domestic violence was an issue for them they were uncertain what they could take from and give to initiatives and because they did not take anything from (or, indeed, give anything to) initiatives they continued to see domestic violence as 'someone else's thing'. Possibly, had education management seen a point in attending, had they understood 'why there were there', and had they seen domestic violence as 'their problem' they would have attended more.

As well as leading us to the broad conclusion that there was a perceived disconnection between the initiatives and service provision, the issue about unimportance and uncertainty also suggests such a disconnection because it suggests that in some agencies

[132] Clearly, Hague and colleagues also see these uncertainties as they recommend that "...it is important for involved agencies to be clear both about why they are there and how they might fit in to domestic violence work in general..." (1996: 23). Again, Hague and colleagues' publications are those mentioned in Chapter Two – Hague et al. (1995a), Hague et al. (1995b, 1996); Hague and Malos (1997, 1998); Hague (1997, 1999, 2000).

there had been no progression from 'why might we attend?'; through 'because it might assist our service provision'; to 'because it might improve service provision'[133].

Certainty.

Interestingly, and in contrast, the interviews set out in Chapter Five suggest that some agencies and organizations were *certain* about why they did not attend the initiatives researched. The interviews conducted in the CPS and the Gamma Domestic Violence Project suggest that some agencies and organizations in Steelsite did not attend SDVF Full Forum meetings because attendance in these meetings appeared too generic – both interviewees in the CPS and the Gamma Project favoured attendance in meetings or settings that had more focused attendance, where agencies and organizations that they 'linked with' or did 'similar work to' attended. Seemingly, the CPS and the Gamma Domestic Violence Project *had connected* their attendance on the SDVF, certainly in Full Forum meetings, and their service provision on domestic violence. The interesting issue is that the CPS and the Gamma Project were two of the most conspicuous poor attendees in Steelsite. Possibly, then, the only agencies and organizations in Pittplace and Steelsite that *were* connecting the initiatives and their service provision were the ones that were not attending or were poor attendees?

Reflecting further on attendance, two other issues seem important – that attendance in each initiative differed in the research period and that numerous agencies, organizations and services attended these initiatives.

Different Attendance.

Attendance on the PDVTG differed from that on the PMADVF and attendance on both Pittplace initiatives differed from that on the SDVF. Attendance on the initiatives researched in Pittplace and Steelsite also differs from attendance on initiatives in other research[134].

One explanation for the differences between attendance on different initiatives is that different research uses different geographical areas. Another explanation centres on multi-agency initiatives themselves. Multi-agency domestic violence initiatives' aims and outputs differ – an initiative centred on criminal justice focused aims and outputs might have more criminal justice agencies as attendees. Likewise, an initiative that has

[133] That is not to assume that this progression happens in reality – as we shall see throughout the subsequent discussion it would be dangerous to assume that initiatives lead necessarily (or at all) to better service provision.
[134] See Chapter Two.

a background in health might have more health-oriented agencies as attendees. Certainly, as seen, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group's (PDVTG) founders included a Pittplace Health Authority representative and in the research period both Pittplace initiatives had health representatives as attendees. The Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum (SDVF), though, had a background in SCC's Community Safety Unit – it had numerous Council representatives as attendees.

From these explanations, one could possibly choose a certain research area and a certain initiative and foresee who might sit around the multi-agency table. One could not, though, choose a certain agency, organization or service and foresee their attendance on a multi-agency domestic violence initiative. This leads to another explanation as to why attendance is different on different initiatives – that it is not immediately obvious who might sit around the multi-agency domestic violence table.

Certainly, it is sometimes not immediately obvious who has an interest in *domestic violence*. Domestic violence is not easily categorized as a 'police issue' or a 'health issue' or a 'housing issue' – one woman might need the police, another woman might not need the police but might need mental health services or sexual health services. Likewise, some women might not need drug and alcohol services but to others substance abuse services might be a strong need. Further, it has not been immediately obvious to *agencies* themselves who has an interest in domestic violence. Service provision has sometimes been grounded in an 'is this really our problem?' thinking.

Secondly, it is sometimes not immediately obvious who has an interest in *multi-agency approaches*. Arguably, it is obvious that the police might sit around the multi-agency domestic violence table, since numerous multi-agency domestic violence initiatives were *police founded*, to encourage a 'better' police response in domestic violence (or to encourage an impression of a better response) and since 1998 police forces have had a statutory duty to sit around the crime and disorder table[135]. It is not, though, as obvious that others might sit around the table. Take domestic violence organizations such as refuges. Though these organizations have an interest in domestic violence, do they have an interest in sitting around the same table as the police or other services whose traditions on domestic violence are questionable? Liz Kelly has said that:

> "...the implied equality of status in the term 'partnership' should, for feminists at least, be treated with considerable caution..." (1999: 87).

[135] See Chapter Two for a discussion of the statutory duty imposed on the police by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Seemingly, it being obvious that the police *might* sit around the multi-agency table is reflected in their attendance – the police *do* sit around most domestic violence multi-agency tables (see Chapter Two and Chapter Five).

Since domestic violence organizations might treat 'partnership' initiatives with the caution that Kelly (1999) demands, it is not immediately obvious that they have an interest in sitting around the multi-agency table.

So, attendance on different multi-agency domestic violence initiatives is different. This might be because agencies differ in different research areas or because initiatives' aims and outputs differ. Further, it might be because it is not immediately obvious who might sit around the multi-agency table.

Numerous Attendance.

Numerous agencies, organizations and/or departments in agencies attended the multi-agency initiatives researched.

This numerous attendance compares to past research. As seen, 21 agencies, organizations and/or departments in agencies 'actively and prominently participated in' nine multi-agency initiatives researched by Hague and colleagues; 26 were 'represented on' seven multi-agency initiatives researched by Dominy and Radford (1996); and 32 were 'represented on' eleven multi-agency initiatives researched by Lewis (1998).

Why this numerous attendance?

Perhaps, it is because numerous attendance is encouraged. The recent Home Office Circular, 'Multi-Agency Guidance For Addressing Domestic Violence', recommends that "...the statutory agencies to whom this guidance is addressed should seek to ensure their own involvement..." (Home Office et al. 2000: para. 3.15)[136]. The Circular recommends, further, that these statutory agencies encourage the "...involvement of the local voluntary sector...", specifically:

- "...Women's Aid and other refuges, helplines, advocacy, support and outreach services
- Specialist domestic violence services including those for women and children from ethnic minorities
- Rape Crisis centres and other rape and sexual assault services
- Child contact services
- Victim Support
- Community organisations, including groups representing survivors of domestic violence..." (Home Office et al. 2000: para. 3.16).

[136] The guidance is directed at the agencies falling within the policy remits of the following Departments: the Home Office; the Women's Unit (Cabinet Office); the Crown Prosecution Service; the Department for Education and Employment; the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions; the Department of Health; the Lord Chancellor's Department; the Department of Social Security; the National Assembly for Wales; and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (Home Office et al. 2000).

The Circular recommends that multi-agency initiatives "...work closely with..." Area Child Protection Committees; "...seek the involvement of..." (Home Office et al. 2000: para. 3.17) judges, magistrates, local members of the legal profession and the private sector. Finally, the Circular recommends that certain organizations be "...kept in touch with..." and "...given the opportunity to take part in..." multi-agency initiatives – "...law centres, Citizens' Advice Bureaux, Relate, Age Concern, community centres, solicitors who specialise in domestic violence, lesbian/gay/bisexual groups and disability groups..." (Home Office et al. 2000: para. 3.18).

Numerous attendance might amplify differing attendance research-to-research as it becomes less obvious *who* might attend. The Home Office encouraging numerous agencies to attend multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in a rather 'catch all' manner does not make it *more* obvious who might attend such initiatives. Whatever the connection between them, these issues are important, not because "...a small 'core' working group with approximately six members may be more suitable for a multi-agency approach..." (Sampson 1991: 16), but because they *also* lead to the broad conclusion that there was a perceived disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision.

So seven issues lead to the broad conclusion that there was a perceived disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision. First, that some individual attendees were specialists in domestic violence but some were not; secondly, that no abused women attended the initiatives researched in Pittplace and Steelsite; thirdly, that many individuals on the initiatives researched were specialist multi-agency people; fourthly, that on each initiative researched, attendance seemed as much about individual concern as agency commitment; fifthly, that each initiative faced 'bad attendance' in the research period; sixthly, that attendance in each initiative researched differed in the research period; and seventhly, that numerous agencies, organizations and services attended these initiatives.

Together these issues lead to the broad conclusion that there was a perceived disconnection because together they highlight that there is *no common pattern of attendance* on multi-agency domestic violence initiatives – essentially, there is *no usual multi-agency attendee* research-to-research, initiative-to-initiative or meeting-to-meeting. One questions, then, just how much agencies, organizations and services problematize, first, *who* should attend and, secondly, *why* they should attend. One

questions, also, how much initiatives think about *who* should attend, *why* they should attend and *what* difference these agencies and organizations attending might bring.

One might, then, question further how much some agencies, organizations and services problematize (their attendance on) initiatives vis-à-vis their service provision on domestic violence and, more, how much some *connect* initiatives and their service provision. Again, the same question might be posed about initiatives. This questioning leads us to the broad conclusion here that there was a *perceived* disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence.

Incidentally, it is no surprise that agencies, organizations and services do not, seemingly, problematize their attendance. Attendance qua attendance is a somewhat assumed – and unproblematized – notion. Certainly, it is around Hague and colleagues' research that most discussion on multi-agency domestic violence approaches has revolved. Yet, Hague and colleagues never examine attendance qua such. Rather, their examination of "...who takes part?..." (Hague 2000: 1) centres on 'participation' and they collapse distinctions between attendance and participation. Yet, agencies can 'be present at' an initiative (attendance), though have no 'share in' that initiative (participation). Hague and colleagues, though, have no monopoly on conflation. Throughout the literature on multi-agency approaches 'attendance'; 'participation'; 'membership'; and 'involvement' are discussed inter-changeably and, under the heading 'participation', the recent Home Office Circular, 'Multi-Agency Guidance For Addressing Domestic Violence', recommends that "...the statutory bodies to which this guidance is addressed should seek to ensure their own *involvement*, and encourage the full and effective *involvement* of the local voluntary sector..." (2000: para. 3.15. Italics Supplied). Such imprecision suggests that no common language underpins discussion on who sits around the multi-agency table, when and how. It is no surprise, then, that agencies do not problematize their attendance – attendance is an unproblematized notion.

Concluding discussions on attendance, reflecting on who attended the multi-agency initiatives researched and when they attended these initiatives, two main conclusions were reached. First, that there was a disconnection *in practice* between the initiatives researched. Two issues were important in reaching this conclusion – that some individual attendees were specialists in domestic violence but some were not and that no abused women attended the initiatives researched in Pittplace and Steelsite.

The second main conclusion reached was that there was a *perceived* disconnection between the initiatives and service provision. Seven issues were important in reaching this conclusion – that some individual attendees were specialists in domestic violence but some were not; that no abused women attended the initiatives researched; that attendance in each initiative researched differed in the research period; that numerous agencies, organizations and services attended these initiatives; that many individuals on the initiatives researched were specialist multi-agency people; that attendance seemed about individual concern; and that each initiative faced 'bad attendance' in the research period. As well as leading to this broad conclusion, the last three issues suggest in themselves that there was a perceived disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence.

3. Multi-Agency Structures.

Main findings in Pittplace and Steelsite also appear to centre on the theme, structures. Structures is a theme here because, reflecting on structures *outside the meeting setting*, a main conclusion is reached – that there was a disconnection between the multi-agency domestic violence initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence.

Numerous points seen in Chapter Five might also be seen as points about multi-agency structures. Some such points centre on the structural differences between the PDVTG, the PMADVF and the SDVF. These differences suggest that there is no multi-agency domestic violence model and, as such, support Hague and colleagues in their assertion that there are no "...distinct models of inter-agency work on domestic violence..." (1996: 11) and Lewis in her assertion that "...there is no single model for an effective Inter-Agency Forum..." (1998: 20; see also Dominy and Radford 1996). Other interesting points centre on duplication, confusion and competition in Pittplace and Steelsite multi-agency domestic violence approaches and suggest that as long as there is duplication and initiatives themselves remain unco-ordinated, initiatives in an area such as Pittplace might not succeed in co-ordinating service provision on domestic violence. Other points centre on changing attendance and suggest that changing attendance might be more nuanced than some researchers suggest, meaning that work and knowledge is not 'picked up'. Other points centre on informality in multi-agency approaches. These points are especially interesting since they differ from points raised about informality in the literature.

Before examining how the main conclusion that there was a disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence is reached, a short reflection on these points about informality is set out[137].

Informality.

'Informality' before and after multi-agency gatherings seemed much less problematic in Pittplace and Steelsite than it has done in past research.

First, before and after the multi-agency meetings researched, attendees exchanged information on their organizations, gossiped about their partners and otherwise engaged in long discussions. Sometimes attendees discussed service users but they never mentioned names. Adam Crawford (1999) found the information exchanged before and after multi-agency gatherings to be much more sensitive than this. Seemingly, on numerous occasions, Crawford (1999) observed local authority and police officers discussing 'problem families', before and after meetings, sharing information casually. Clearly, Pittplace/Steelsite attendees were much more restrained than attendees in Crawford's (1999) research. This may have been because they realized that sensitive information exchange could, in domestic violence, undermine women's safety. Also, this may have been because most attendees in Pittplace and Steelsite were not service providers and so had no sensitive information about service users to exchange.

Informality in settings beyond multi-agency gatherings, *shadow settings*, also seemed much less problematic in Pittplace and Steelsite than it has done in past research. There were clearly shadow settings in Pittplace and Steelsite – on numerous occasions in the PDVTG and the SDVF, it seemed that 'behind-the-scenes' discussions had occurred, centred on the Chair/worker and certain other attendees. Again, though, these informal settings as certain attendees discussed business matters behind-the-scenes seemed much less problematic than in Adam Crawford's (1999) research. Readers might remember that Crawford and Jones discuss how liaison in informal settings sometimes occurred "...at crucial and strategic moments in the life of a crime prevention project..." (1995: 27), such as when senior police and probation officers on the multi-agency Tenmouth Anti-Burglary Initiative met informally in the police bar and redefined the initiative's aims and objectives. Adam Crawford (1998, 1999) argues that informal liaison, such as that seen in Tenmouth, means that problematic issues are managed 'off stage' and

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[137] These interesting points are examined only quickly because the word limit that is imposed on this thesis means they cannot be examined in full. They will, though, be examined in the researcher's other publications.

conflict is avoided in multi-agency crime prevention. Crawford is concerned that this managing 'off stage' is grounded in a "...pervasive 'ideology of unity'..." (1998: 173, 1999). But the shadow settings seen in the Pittplace/Steelsite initiatives researched seemed much more grounded in pragmatic issues – 'getting things done' – than in a "...stampede for 'unity'..." (Crawford 1998: 173). Arguably, the shadow settings in Pittplace/Steelsite were less grounded in a pervasive ideology of unity than in a pervasive ideology of efficiency.

So, numerous interesting points seen in the research might be seen as points about multi-agency structures. Some such points centred on 'informality' and are interesting because they differ to points raised in the literature. Structures, though, is a theme here because, reflecting on structures *outside the meeting setting*, a main conclusion reached – that there was a disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence.

How is this conclusion reached? One issue is important – contacts outside multi-agency meetings.

Contacts Outside Meetings.

Perhaps the most important issue about multi-agency structures is that most attendees in Pittplace and Steelsite did not contact each other outside the meeting setting about service provision.

Readers might remember the research interviews that were set out in Chapter Five. These interviews suggest that, though service provision in numerous agencies and organizations in Pittplace and Steelsite was collaborative, most individual attendees did *not* collaborate with other initiative attendees in their service provision. *Some* individual attendees on the initiatives researched in Pittplace and Steelsite clearly did contact each other outside multi-agency meetings. Hillshire Police DVOs seemed the most likely to contact other attendees and to be contacted by other attendees. Other individual attendees were uncertain about whether they contacted other attendees or not. One attendee said that she 'probably did' but that she 'wouldn't have identified them from' the SDVF. Other individual attendees on the initiatives researched *were* collaborative but *not* with other initiative attendees – they contacted others in the agency or organization.

Why might this be? The interviews set out in Chapter Five suggest three main explanations.

The first explanation is that some agencies and organizations attending the initiatives researched were lone service providers and did not need to contact each other on service provision, as the SCC Housing Department attendee (Interviewee 38) said, 'we don't have to go to anyone else to find a property because we've got enough of those of our own'.

The second explanation is that some were managers. When questioned about their contacts outside meetings on and around service provision, numerous research interviewees said that 'I don't particularly get involved in individual cases' and 'I don't do case work'. Other interviewees said that initiative attendees were 'generally a bit higher up than the people who're doing the referring – the grass roots workers'. These attendees did not contact others about service provision, domestic violence or otherwise.

The third explanation centres on pragmatism. Attendees did not contact each other about service provision because they 'worked with whoever they managed to contact at the time' – it 'wouldn't automatically be someone that they'd met' in the initiatives researched. Essentially, pragmatism determined who did they and did not contact.

So, attendees on the initiatives researched did not contact each other outside initiative meetings. This leads us to conclude that there was a disconnection between these initiatives and service provision on domestic violence. Whatever the explanation, because attendees in Pittplace and Steelsite did not contact each other outside meetings about service provision, there was a disconnection *in practice* – initiatives and service provision *were* disconnected

So, numerous interesting points seen in the research might be seen as points about multi-agency structures. Some such points centred on 'informality' and are interesting because they differ to points raised in the literature. Structures, though, is a theme here because, reflecting on structures *outside the meeting setting*, a main conclusion reached – that there was a disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence. One issue is important in reaching that conclusion – that most attendees in Pittplace and Steelsite did not contact each other outside the meeting setting about service provision.

4. Multi-Agency Aims, Objectives, Outputs and Outcomes.

Outcomes is a theme in the Pittplace and Steelsite research on multi-agency approaches to domestic violence because numerous issues raised about the aims, objectives, outputs and outcomes of the multi-agency initiatives researched lead us to three main

conclusions. First, there was a *caused* disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence. Secondly, there was a disconnection *in practice* between the initiatives and such provision and, thirdly, there was a *perceived* disconnection.

How are these conclusions reached?

First, issues raised about the aims and objectives of the initiatives researched are important.

Aims and Objectives.

Pittplace and Steelsite multi-agency initiatives' aims and objectives are set out in Chapter Five. Reflecting on these aims and objectives, it appears that these initiatives 'wanted to achieve' two main 'results' – better service provision on and prevention of domestic violence.

Service Provision on Domestic Violence.

The initiatives researched wanted to *improve* service provision and/or *undertake* it. Further, they wanted to *encourage liaison* on responses to domestic violence. This is encouraging. Good service provision is essential in domestic violence and, on liaison, it is increasingly seen that most women need numerous, differing services[138]. The issue that the initiatives researched wanted to improve service provision and encourage liaison on it is perhaps the one issue that opposes the researcher's main argument that there was a disconnection between the initiatives researched in Pittplace and Steelsite and service provision on domestic violence. Nonetheless, in these aims, the initiatives researched did not found the strong connection with service provision that they could have done. There were two reasons for this. First, their outputs and outcomes ensured that their aims centred on service provision were rather doomed. This issue is discussed below. The second reason is that their aims on service provision, especially their aims on *encouraging liaison* were rather muddled. This issue is discussed here.

Encouraging Liaison.

The initiatives researched clearly wanted to encourage liaison on service provision in Pittplace and Steelsite. But, it seems these initiatives were uncertain about *just what they wanted* when they said they wanted to achieve this aim. This seems so because

[138] Discussed more in Chapter Seven.

they appeared unsure about the conceptual distinctions between different liaison. They used notions such as 'consistency', 'co-ordination', 'collaboration' and 'multi-agency' interchangeably, assuming each were the same. So, the PDVTG aimed to 'achieve a more effective multi-agency response to the provision of services for victims'. Likewise, since 1994, the SDVF has aimed 'to work towards a consistent and co-ordinated response to domestic violence in the city' – since 2000, it has wanted a 'consistent response within individual agencies' and 'a co-ordinated and integrated multi-agency response across the city'. But, these notions are not the same.

Multi-agency service provision is agencies 'doing their thing' *with* other agencies. *Collaborative* service provision is agencies 'doing their thing', but depending on other in doing it. *Inter-agency* service provision is agencies doing more than their own thing and going past traditional service provision: "...inter-agency work may impact on the nature of mainstream service delivery..." (Crawford 1998: 175; see Crawford and Jones 1996). A *consistent* response to domestic violence is *comparable* service provision throughout one agency (and throughout one city) *each time* that agency is approached, *whoever* is approaching and *whoever* is approached. Consistent responses encourage *organizational* self-reflection but *co-ordinated* responses encourage *inter*-organizational reflection. Co-ordinated responses are grounded in co-ordinated service provision and centre on harmonization – police services grounded in arrest alongside the provision of safe immediate, temporary and permanent accommodation (see Pence and McMahon 1999; Shepard and Pence 1999). Collaborative and/or multi-agency responses, though, centre on *mutualization* –'doing one's thing', but depending on others in doing it or 'doing one's thing' with others.

Because the initiatives researched appeared unsure about the conceptual distinctions between different liaison, though, it seems they were uncertain about just what they wanted in their aims centred on liaison – did they want co-ordination or collaboration? This uncertainty about liaison in approaches *based on* liaison is unfortunate and is one reason why the initiatives researched did not found the strong connection with service provision that they could have done.

Reflecting further on the Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives' aims and objectives and comparing these aims and objectives to initiatives in other research, another, perhaps more important, issue is raised – that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives increasingly want *prevention*. This issue leads us to conclude that there is sometimes a *caused* disconnection between initiatives and service provision.

The initiatives researched aimed both for prevention – 'to reduce the incidence of domestic violence' (PDVTG) – and for a 'consolation prize' (see Crawford 1998) – 'to reduce the fear of domestic violence' (PDVTG). Some of their aims and objectives here centred on victims[139]. Not all, though – each initiative researched (that had aims) also had aims centred on perpetrators[140].

Comparing the initiatives researched in Pittplace and Steelsite and initiatives in other research, it seems that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives do increasingly want prevention (victim or offender oriented). So, the PDVTG set out wanting 'to develop a borough-wide strategy for addressing domestic violence' but since 1999 it has wanted to 'reduce the incidence of domestic violence'. Clearly, 'addressing' *could* (but might not) mean prevention but 'reducing incidence' is unquestionably centred on prevention. Likewise, though the Leeds Inter-Agency Project (LIAP) decided in 1991 on a main aim that centred on *service provision*[141], another 'flag-ship' initiative, the Hammersmith and Fulham Domestic Violence Forum (HFDVF), decided in 1994/1995 that it wanted *prevention* – unqualified prevention no less[142]. Indeed, initiatives appear much *bolder* in their aims centred on prevention as time has passed – from 'combating domestic violence' in 1996 (see Hague and colleagues); through 'working together against domestic violence' in 1998 (see Lewis); to 'reducing the extent of domestic violence' in 2000 (see PDVTG).

The issue that initiatives increasingly want prevention *rather than* service provision leads us to conclude that there is sometimes a *caused* disconnection between initiatives on domestic violence and service provision on domestic violence. Initiatives that aim to 'contribute to public awareness campaigns', or to 'raise public awareness of the realities

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[139] 'To obtain funding in order to contribute to the county-wide public awareness campaign proposed by the Hillshire Multi-Agency Forum' (PDVTG); 'to increase the support services available to women, and for children and young people affected by violence' (PDVTG); 'to raise public awareness of the realities and effects of domestic abuse through publicity and campaigns' (SDVF); and 'to advance the education of the public in all aspects of domestic violence, its causes, remedies and prevention' (SDVF).

[140] 'To ensure that all children and young people are exposed to primary prevention work which promotes respect and non-violent conflict resolution' (SDVF);'to develop effective responses that challenge male perpetrators of domestic abuse' (SDVF);'to increase the opportunities for perpetrators to access behaviour change work' (PDVTG); and 'to ensure that work that is undertaken with perpetrators places the safety of women and children first and is evaluated for its impact on harm reduction' (PDVTG).

[141] "...To improve protection and support services to women who are abused by men known to them and to ensure that the needs of children of abused women are integrated into the provision of services..." (LIAP 1991; see Andrea Tara-Chand 1999).

[142] The Hammersmith and Fulham Domestic Violence Forum's (HFDVF) "...overarching 'vision statement'...", decided in 1994/1995 is "...to work towards an end to all forms of domestic violence especially that directed at women and children..." (Holder 1999: 119).

and effects of domestic abuse', or 'to ensure that all children and young people are exposed to primary prevention work' cause a disconnection between initiatives and service provision through fitting themselves into a mould that traditionally characterises mainstream offences and so reducing their emphasis on service provision.

Is this increasing focus on prevention in initiatives' aims reflected in initiatives' outputs?

Outputs.

Seemingly, the focus on crime prevention in initiatives' aims *was* reflected in the initiatives' outputs. These outputs are set out in Chapter Five. Clearly, some outputs do not suggest this focus. Nonetheless, the initiatives researched did support a domestic violence drama production (PDVTG) in the research period and had supported the Hillshire Just Stop It awareness raising campaign as this period commenced (each initiative), both classic primary (victim or offender) oriented crime prevention measures on van Dijk and de Waard's (1991; see van Dijk 1990) conceptualization.

Perhaps the focus on crime prevention is best seen in those outputs centred on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Readers might remember that each initiative researched had such outputs in the research period – the PDVTG assumed a main role in Pittplace's crime and disorder process; the PMADVF received presentations on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998; and the SDVF, on the SSSG's instructions, submitted a bid to the Home Office's CRP. Thinking about the main initiatives researched, the PDVTG and the SDVF, each crime and disorder output here, then, pushed these initiatives into an environment that is centred on crime prevention and crime reduction – the PDVTG in getting encompassed in Pittplace's crime prevention arena and the SDVF in getting involved in a flag-ship crime reduction programme.

Interestingly, the initiatives' outputs centred on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 not only appeared to reflect the focus on crime prevention in initiatives' aims but appeared also to reflect the focus on crime prevention in *developments* on domestic violence. Readers might remember that Chapter Two discussions highlighted that domestic violence is increasingly positioned on the Home Office crime prevention landscape. The initiatives' outputs centred on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 reflected this changing position better than most issues seen in Pittplace and Steelsite. Perhaps this increasing focus on prevention in initiatives' outputs suggests, as numerous other issues discussed here also suggest, a disconnection between the initiatives researched and

service provision. The reasoning might be the same as that set out on initiatives' aims – initiatives might be causing a disconnection through fitting themselves (in their outputs) into a mould that traditionally characterises mainstream offences and so reducing their emphasis on service provision.

Regardless, reflecting on what the initiatives researched did, other issues are important in suggesting such a disconnection. Indeed, three issues are important in leading to two main conclusions – that there was a disconnection *in practice* between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence and that there was a *caused* disconnection between the initiatives and such provision. The three issues that are important in leading to these conclusions are, first, that Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives could not plan service provision on domestic violence; secondly, that these initiatives sought to undertake service provision that competed with and threatened existing service providers and seemed based more on personal goals; and thirdly, that the initiatives researched were in competition with essential service providers for funding.

Guidance on Direct Service Provision.

Through a training programme and multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse, a main SDVF output centred on guidance on service provision. No Pittplace initiatives, though, had this output. Interestingly, though, in Pittplace and Steelsite there seemed uncertainty around *who* was guiding on service provision and *what* this guidance meant. Certainly, one PMADVF attendee thought Pittplace initiatives *did* train on domestic violence and, though a main SDVF aim and output, confusion surrounded Steelsite's multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse.

Why this uncertainty on who is guiding in service provision and what this guidance means? One main reason centres on agencies' autonomy. Seemingly, there was uncertainty around what the Steelsite guidance meant because Steelsite agencies were (are) *autonomous* – Steelsite agencies *could*, but *need not*, use it. This means that initiatives such as the SDVF *can* guide on service provision but *cannot* guarantee that their guidance is heard, understood or used. Their guidance, then, is *nothing more* than guidance. Agencies' autonomy means that initiatives can *guide* on service provision but can do no more – initiatives cannot *plan* it. Clearly, under no circumstances had the SDVF assumed a role in planning the 'consistent and co-ordinated response' that it wanted – though the SDVF *hoped* Steelsite agencies might use the multi-agency strategy in their service planning *nothing* guaranteed this.

As there was uncertainty on who was guiding on service provision and what this guidance meant, there was not much connection in Pittplace and Steelsite between multi-agency domestic violence initiatives' aims and outputs – the Steelsite guidance hardly further SDVF aims centred on 'co-ordinating' service provision. Interestingly, there is the same disconnection between initiatives' aims, outputs and *outcomes* on this issue – though the SDVF aimed to be a service co-ordinator through guiding on service provision, because it could guide but not plan it did not co-ordinate such.

More, the issue that the initiatives researched could guide but not plan service provision on domestic violence leads us to conclude, once more, that there was a disconnection *in practice* between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence – the initiatives researched *were* disconnected from service provision in Pittplace and Steelsite because none could influence or inform that service provision.

Undertaking Direct Service Provision.

Throughout the research period, the PDVTG continued to plan an additional refuge in Pittplace and the SDVF planned to found a community based support organization, though no such organization had been founded as the research period ceased. In past research, just Hague and colleagues' initiatives undertook direct service provision on domestic violence. Possibly, undertaking such provision is an increasingly common output of multi-agency domestic violence initiatives? Yet, the main issue here is not the possibility that undertaking direct service provision is an increasingly common output. Rather, the main issues are more worrying.

First, the PDVTG's plans around an additional refuge in Pittplace seemed centred on *personal* rather than organizational goals. Though a PDVTG objective, the planning of an additional refuge in Pittplace increasingly seemed a 'one woman show', run by the PDVTG Chair. On occasions, it seemed the Chair had 'hijacked' this refuge project. Undoubtedly, the PDVTG Chair had huge commitment to this project. Yet, it seemed a PDVTG objective had been used to realize a personal goal.

Clearly, realizing personal goals is not 'multi-agency', nor does it encourage accountability, nor does it associate initiatives' aims and outputs. Further, *who* can hijack projects? Who can use projects to realize personal goals? Probably not 'grass-roots' practitioners. An associated point here is that personal goals (probably of statutory agency managers) might be grounded more in *assumptions* about domestic violence, women's needs and service provision. Certainly, though Pittplace needed

more refuge provision, it had no organization supporting ethnic minority women – did Pittplace's refuge project centre on personal goals that were grounded in an assumptions that domestic violence service provision needs in Pittplace were housing not support oriented? The researcher concedes that Pittplace has only a small ethnic minority population[143] and, further, that Pittplace (as most areas do) did need more refuge provision – the one existing refuge could not accommodate 15 women and 30 children between 1997 and 1998 because it was full (Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge 1998). However, these concessions do not undermine the broad issue here that assumptions about one domestic violence need might marginalize another different domestic violence need.

Another main issue is that there seemed concern in Steelsite about the SDVF undertaking service provision *in competition with existing service providers*. Encouraging multi-agency domestic violence initiatives to support such existing service providers, Interviewee 26 certainly seemed concerned that an initiative inspired project might compete with established community support organizations.

Clearly, competition between service providers is worrying. Further, an output that threatens existing service provision is not only incompatible with initiatives' aims and other outputs centred on *increasing* women's support services, but is incompatible with their other aims centred on service provision per se. Certainly, a SDVF output that threatens existing service provision is incompatible with SDVF aims around 'providing a comprehensive range of services', 'ensuring that services are accessible' et cetera. More, such an output is incompatible with the SDVF's vision – a consistent, co-ordinated response, since competition does *not* characterize co-ordinated service provision.

So, research in Pittplace and Steelsite has highlighted that initiatives might increasingly be undertaking service provision on domestic violence but also highlights other main issues – that multi-agency domestic violence initiative inspired projects might centre on personal goals that are more grounded in assumptions about domestic violence, women's needs and service provision and that initiative inspired projects might compete with established community support organizations. Each point is worrying. More, the issue that the initiatives researched sought to undertake service provision that appeared based more on personal goals and that competed with and threatened existing service providers seems, once more, to suggest that there was a disconnection between the

[143] See Chapter Three.

initiatives and service provision. The issue leads to the conclusion that the initiatives researched *caused* such a disconnection.

Getting Funding.

Getting funding assumed a big role in driving the SDVF's main outputs in the research period – funding and getting funding rather than domestic violence service provision appeared to be driving the SDVF's work. Perhaps, once more, there was a disconnection *in practice* between, at least one, initiative researched and service provision on domestic violence – as no initiatives researched could influence or inform service provision in Pittplace and Steelsite, so that service provision neither informed nor influenced certain SDVF outputs.

The bigger issue is that the multi-agency domestic violence initiatives researched also generated resources *for themselves*. Certainly, the PDVTG secured Health Action Zone (HAZ) funding for a part-time co-ordinator and the SDVF secured National Lotteries Charities Board (NLCB) funding for both a Voluntary Sector Development Project and research with Steelsite University, as well as Hillshire Police Community Initiatives Programme (CIP) funding for a co-ordinator and part-time administrative worker. Worryingly, the initiatives researched were in competition in getting this funding with domestic violence organizations such as refuges, helplines and support organizations. Indeed, the HAZ, NLCB and CIP also funded Pittplace and Steelsite domestic violence organizations. Such competition is common – in Hague and colleagues' research, initiatives in two of three main 'study areas' were in direct competition with refuges in obtaining grant aid.

Hague et al. assert that "...current best practice is clearly that multi-agency projects should not compete with Women's Aid and the refuge movement for grant-aid..." but concede that multi-agency initiatives "...can act as a vital catalyst to increased funding for the provision of refuges and direct services..." (1996: 36). Hague and colleagues see this as a 'difficult' issue. But is it so difficult? Arguably, not. On the 'catalyst' point, why do initiatives need funding to be a catalyst? Hague and colleagues are suggesting here that it is not initiatives' *multi-agency* status that makes them a catalyst but their *moneyed* status. But surely initiatives could still be a catalyst without being funded? Further, in presenting themselves as equally deserving of funding, initiatives could, rather than be a catalyst, just muddy the funding waters. Anyway, it is argued that, rather than being difficult, the issue is straightforward – it is unacceptable that

multi-agency domestic violence initiatives are competing with *essential service providers* for funding.

Sometimes, the initiatives researched seemed to recognize this. Certainly, the SDVF co-ordinator/development worker said in a meeting in the research period, 'it seems crazy that we're competing for funding with the local projects'. Other times, though, the SDVF did not suggest this recognition. Certainly, the SDVF's press release as it launched a multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse read:

> "...the strategy is also about securing funds for the voluntary sector projects that provide the specialist frontline services for women and children. They are now recognised as crucial partners in this work, but constantly have to compete with each other for pots of short term funding...this resourcing issue needs addressing urgently..." (SDVF 20.7.00.).

Clearly, that these 'crucial partners' were also competing with the SDVF, is rather forgotten here.

Multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence *should* recognize that competing with essential service providers is unacceptable and is, indeed, crazy. More, such competition for funding leads us, yet again, to conclude that there was a disconnection – a *caused* disconnection – between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence. How can another conclusion be reached when the initiatives researched were *trying to outdo* service providers?

Concluding on outputs, reflecting on what the initiatives researched did, it could be seen that the increasing focus on prevention suggested in initiatives' aims was reflected in initiatives' outputs. Further, three issues were important in leading to two main conclusions – that there was a disconnection *in practice* between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence and that there was a *caused* disconnection between the initiatives and such provision.

Outcomes.

Considering the 'broader consequences' of the Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives' outputs, two issues are especially important in leading to three main conclusions – that there was a *caused* disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence, that there was a disconnection *in practice* between the initiatives and such provision and that there was a *perceived* disconnection. The two issues that are important in leading to these conclusions centre, first, on 'supporting' direct service providers and, secondly, on networking and interaction.

Another interesting point seen in Chapter Five is also about the Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives' outcomes. This point is that the initiatives researched were, unquestionably, consensus builders and is interesting because it is so different from points raised in other research discussions. Before the issues about supporting direct service providers and networking and interaction are discussed, this other outcome might be discussed.

Consensus Building.

'Very difficult situations' did not characterize the initiatives researched and most research interviewees said that that there had been no disagreements in these initiatives. Further, there were no principled differences on 'the domestic violence problem' in Pittplace and Steelsite and attendees were 'batting from the same wicket'. But, this is uncommon in multi-agency approaches. Pearson et al. certainly found "...significant areas of difficulty..." regarding "...who defines the boundaries of a locality, its problems and its needs..." (1992: 58)[144]. Likewise, Hague et al. found big "...philosophical and operational differences between agencies and differing attitudes to domestic violence..." (1996: 26)[145].

Both research observations and the research interviews set out in Chapter Five suggest points that might explain these issues. One point is that neither the PDVTG nor the SDVF discussed domestic violence, much less differed or disagreed on it. Rather, discussion in both centred on their objectives and outputs. The PMADVF did, though, discuss opinions on domestic violence on numerous occasions but it too did not host principled differences or disagreement – on each occasion it seemed that attendees' opinions were more or less the same and that most attendees agreed. Another point is that, in Pittplace, there was no Women's Aid organization and the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge was not affiliated to the Women's Aid Federation England. More, a Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge representative voiced the most contentious opinion on domestic violence seen in the research – that women 'with not everything up there' cannot make choices on their circumstances. Since woman centred 'analyses' were never espoused in Pittplace and a *refuge representative* colluded in 'overlooking' and 'diluting' such analyses, 'contention around Women's Aid's opinions' and the principled differences on domestic violence seen in past research were improbable in Pittplace initiatives. Another point, as per the Steelsite interviewees, is that there had been disagreements in the SDVF but, as one put it, *not recently* – seemingly, there had

[144] See Chapter Two.
[145] See Chapter Two.

been some difficult situations but these had been before the research period. Perhaps, the Pittplace and Steelsite research differs on this issue because initiatives are increasingly *surmounting* disagreements (see Lewis 1998).

A fourth point is more worrying. Possibly, there seemed no principled differences and disagreements in the initiatives researched because agencies with different principles did not attend. Though there seemed no 'boycotting' of Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives as has happened in some research (see Sampson et al. 1988; Hague et al. 1996), agencies differing on certain issues were poor attendees. Readers might remember the Gamma Domestic Violence Project here, alone in Steelsite in providing services to women *and men*. As seen in Chapter Five, the Gamma Project research interviewee held different opinions on numerous issues to other interviewees. As also seen, the Gamma Project attended the Steelsite Forum just once in the research period.

So, the initiatives researched were consensus builders. Such consensus could be grounded, first, on domestic violence not being discussed, secondly, in Pittplace, in there being no Women's Aid organization – here, contention around Women's Aid's opinions' and the principled differences on domestic violence seen in other research were improbable. Thirdly, it could be that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives are increasingly surmounting principled differences. Finally, it could be grounded in agencies with different principles not attending. Whatever, the point that the initiatives researched were consensus builders is interesting because it is so different from points raised in other research discussions.

The other issues about outcomes are also important.

'Supporting' Direct Service Providers.

The initiatives researched 'supported' most attendees. Some attendees seemingly "...love ..." (PDVTG 9.6.00.) attending Pittplace/Steelsite initiatives and Interviewee 39 voiced a received opinion in Pittplace and Steelsite that 'what the SDVF enables us to do is gain a little bit of strength and support'. Other research has found that initiatives 'support' attendees[146]. Again, though, this is not the main issue here. Rather, the main issue is this. The initiatives researched supported and encouraged attendees and so met *their* needs but extended no support to *women and children* and so did not meet *their* needs. Certainly, the initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite extended *no time in their discussions* to women and children, their experiences or their needs.

[146] See Chapter Two for Hague and colleagues' discussions here.

Indeed, reflecting on discussion in the PDVTG, perhaps the most interesting point raised was that, throughout the research period, it seemed that issues such as domestic violence and domestic violence service provision were marginalized as time and again discussion reverted to the Group's objectives or the other standard issues set out earlier. The PDVTG did not discuss domestic violence. Neither did it discuss how women and children experience domestic violence nor how women and children experience services and service provision. The SDVF did not discuss domestic violence and domestic violence service provision – probably because, as the Topic Group in Pittplace, it spent too much time discussing Forum work and the other issues set out earlier. Though the SDVF hosted numerous presentations in the research period, no such presentations were on domestic violence or domestic violence service provision – many centred on *women's issues*. Even in those presentations that were on agencies' and organizations' service provision, the SDVF neither discussed how women and children experience domestic violence nor how women and children experience services and service provision.

One might wonder how multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence can meet the needs of women and children when these initiatives do not discuss women and children, let alone discuss their needs. Readers might remember[147] that, in their pioneering research, Pearson and colleagues made the point that:

> "...although the Queen's Reach forum met the needs of its members in terms of mutual support and encouragement, it remains highly questionable whether it was meeting the needs of the estate itself and its residents..." (Pearson et al. 1992: 64)

It is surprising and concerning that, more than a decade on, this lesson has not been learned. Perhaps more surprising, and indeed concerning, are the assumptions that are, it seems, too readily made on this issue. Certainly, Dominy and Radford argue that "...the support some members have gained from their forums...can only be of benefit to women in Surrey..." (1996: 53). The Pittplace/Steelsite research suggests, as Pearson and colleagues' research suggested previously, that one *cannot* assume that supporting attendees means benefiting women.

The Pittplace/Steelsite research repeats another point that Pearson and colleagues made on this issue – that initiatives do not support communities because they become *ends in themselves*. Numerous research findings set out earlier suggest that, certainly the PDVTG, had become or was becoming an end in itself. Readers might remember that, in March 2000, PDVTG attendees were determined to 'fight our own corner' on the

[147] The quote that follows is set out in Chapter Two.

Hillshire Crime Reduction Programme (CRP) bid, appearing most concerned how one (Steelsite) bid might affect *the PDVTG*, though less concerned how such a bid might affect domestic violence service users and service provision. Also, on numerous occasions the PDVTG 'played it safe' and avoided discussion on 'difficult' issues, such as reviewing the Group's objectives. Again, the Group seemed more concerned that such discussion might raise issues that some might rather not hear and so harm the Group but less concerned that a discussion about the Group's objectives could highlight whether or not the objectives were affecting service users and service provision. Also, PDVTG minutes stressed issues that reflected well on the Group but avoided those that reflected badly. This suggested that the PDVTG could be more concerned with what it *says* it is doing, rather than what it *is doing*.

Whether or not the initiatives researched had become ends in themselves, their *work* had certainly become such an end. So, in Steelsite *not* 'needing a CRP bid right now' seemed based much more on SDVF work considerations than on Steelsite service provision considerations. Further, as mentioned, throughout the research period the main initiatives researched discussed *their objectives* or *work* rather than discussing domestic violence or service provision on domestic violence. More, it seemed some attendees in Pittplace thought 'why they were there' was to discuss the PDVTG's objectives and the focus in SDVF discussions on Forum work was reflected in research interviewees' opinions about the SDVF.

Sometimes, then, Pittplace/Steelsite initiatives or their work were 'ends in themselves'. Readers might remember Pearson and colleagues' point that:

> "...[the Queen's Reach Forum] has become an end in itself, with members apparently taking the view that by simply sitting down together and reaching surface agreement on a number of issues this is something which will contribute to an improvement in the quality of life on Queen's Reach..." (Blagg et al. 1988: 215).

Again, it is surprising and worrying that the Pittplace/Steelsite research raises the same issue that so concerned Pearson and colleagues more than a decade ago.

The issue that the initiatives researched supported and so met *their* needs but did not meet *women and children's* needs and the associated issue that the initiatives did not support women and children (compare Pearson and colleagues' 'communities') through becoming *ends in themselves* leads to the conclusion that there was a *caused* disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision. Clearly, there is such a disconnection as initiatives or their work become 'ends in themselves' because initiatives becoming ends in themselves might mean that service provision is forgotten,

marginalized or, worse, that initiatives become bigger and better than service provision on domestic violence.

Networking and Interaction.

Reflecting further on outcomes, two other conclusions are reached – that there was a disconnection *in practice* between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence and that there was a *perceived* disconnection. Another issue – networking and interaction – is important in leading to this conclusion. Though some attendees did contact each other outside meetings, it seems this (limited[148]) interaction was *associated with* but not *based on* Pittplace/Steelsite initiatives. Readers might remember the research interviews that were set out in Chapter Five. These interviews suggest that individual attendees' collaboration and contacts did not happen *because* these individuals attended the initiatives researched. This is uncommon. Hague et al. found that "...networking and communication improved greatly between agencies as a result of inter-agency initiatives..." (1996: 41). Likewise, Lewis (1998) found that most initiatives 'engaged in' 'networking' and that ten out of ten initiatives 'improved co-operation between agencies'. Dominy and Radford (1996) found that most attendees thought that initiatives had improved 'inter-agency practice'.

Why the difference in Pittplace and Steelsite? Again, the research interviews set out in Chapter Five suggest explanations. The first explanation suggested is that individual attendees were *already liaising*. Certainly, a Pittplace Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) discussed 'referrals' – 'I was referring onto the DVO two years before I went to the PMADVF'. Some research interviews suggest, then, that attendance on the initiatives researched 'hasn't changed things' as far as collaboration and contacts outside meetings goes.

The second explanation suggested is that some attendees gained connections *without* Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives. Certainly, one interviewee said her 'working relationships' were based on 'just my basic past work experience' – 'knowing what resources should be available and seeking them out'. Another interviewee talked about 'making all the effort' through 'phoning and setting up meetings'. Interestingly, a police DVO in Pittplace said her connections were through victims – 'how I've met people on the way is at case conferences'. Some were uncertain about their

[148] As seen in our discussions on multi-agency structures, most Pittplace/Steelsite attendees *rarely* contacted each other outside initiative meetings.

collaboration and their contacts. Certainly, a Steelsite solicitor discussed getting 'referrals from funny places' such as 'the Cathedral'.

In numerous research interviews it appeared that interviewees were puzzled as questions were posed about their liaison being based on the initiatives researched. Most seemed surprised that the researcher thought it might be – a feeling that 'why would it be?' could be sensed in most interviews. Further, some were rather concerned that liaison on service provision *could be* based on initiatives. Readers might remember one research interviewee saying she 'would see that as kind of problematic'.

The issue about networking and interaction, then, is important in leading us to conclude both that there was a disconnection *in practice* between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence and also that there was a *perceived* disconnection between the initiatives and such provision. There was a disconnection in practice since attendees' collaborative service provision was *not based* on (their attendance on) initiatives and there is a perceived disconnection since attendees were both puzzled and concerned that such collaboration would be based on such.

Reflecting on Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives' outputs and outcomes, perhaps the one remaining issue is that both main initiatives researched had outputs and outcomes that were rather at odds with their aims and objectives, especially their aims and objectives centred on service provision. Outputs that put initiatives in competition with existing community support organizations in providing services or those that put initiatives in competition with such organizations for funding do nothing to advance, much less achieve, initiatives' aims centred on bettering or co-ordinating service provision. Likewise, an initiative becoming an end in itself is under no circumstances an outcome that means initiatives' aims centred on service provision might be advanced or achieved[149]. More, the initiatives' aims and objectives about service provision were rather doomed because their outputs and outcomes were rather at odds with these aims. This was the second reason that, in their aims centred on improving service provision

[149] Indeed, throughout the research it seemed that the initiatives researched did not think through their aims, outputs and outcomes. Though each initiative had outputs centred on awareness raising, initiatives themselves were unsure whether or not awareness had been raised – no initiative researched found out (or cared?) that these outputs had raised awareness. This was a clear example of their failure to think through their aims, outputs and outcomes. These initiatives did not, seemingly, go through a thought process from 'we are aiming to prevent domestic violence', through 'let us raise awareness by producing resources', to 'was awareness raised?'. Outputs and outcomes about awareness raising are not discussed in the themed discussion here. The outputs and outcomes discussed here were chosen because issues raised about each lead to the conclusion that there was a disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence, be that a disconnection in practice, a perceived disconnection or a caused disconnection. The initiatives researched, though, did have other outputs and outcomes that are not discussed here.

and encouraging liaison on it, the initiatives researched did not found the strong connection with service provision that they could have done[150].

Concluding on the 'broader consequences' of the Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives' outputs, two issues were especially important in leading to three main conclusions – that there was a *caused* disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence, that there was a disconnection *in practice* between the initiatives and such provision and that there was a *perceived* disconnection.

5. Power.

There are two main reasons why power is a theme in the Pittplace and Steelsite research. First, power underpins sexual violence (Kelly 1988). As Michelle Bograd has said, "...men as a class wield power over women...all men can potentially use violence as a powerful means of subordinating women..." (1988: 14). More specifically, power underpins domestic violence. As Radford and Stanko say, the "...family is a central institution in patriarchal society, one in which private struggles around patriarchal power relations are enacted, and hence one in which violence often features as a form of control of the powerless by the powerful..." (1991: 200).

Secondly, the literature suggests that power is paramount in multi-agency approaches. As such, there is, potentially, an obvious analogy between power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches and power in domestic violence relationships. As Kelly has said:

> "...reflecting on the meaning of 'partnership' in the context of domestic violence is especially poignant. The violence women suffer arises within, and out of, particular forms of partnership where *the exercise of power and control by one partner against the other* becomes routine and has been historically accepted and even legitimated..." (1999: 87. Italics Supplied).

Power is a theme, then, because *it has to be*. Research on sexual violence cannot avoid examining power and research on multi-agency approaches in domestic violence can certainly not escape such an examination. Though attendance, structures and outcomes are themes in Pittplace and Steelsite because issues are raised under them that lead to the researcher's main conclusion, power is a theme because it has to be. That is not, though, to suggest that points raised about power do not lead to this conclusion. Rather, some points here *do* suggest that there was or was potentially a disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence. These points are

[150] The first reason was discussed above at page 233.

seen as two main issues are examined – what power is and what the consequences of having power are[151].

'Power' – What It Is.

First and foremost, power in domestic violence multi-agency approaches is not *using force* to control and subordinate as it is in domestic violence. As mentioned, there is potentially an analogy between power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches and power in domestic violence relationships. But, though analogous, power in domestic violence multi-agency initiatives is not the same as it is in domestic violence relationships.

Arguably, power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches centres on access to women and on access to certain information, knowledge and/or expertise. Why is this argued?

Access to Women.

'Power' in multi-agency domestic violence approaches might be conceptualized as access to women and children experiencing domestic violence because service provision on domestic violence is increasingly grounded in women centred discourse.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, a vast literature argued that police responses to domestic violence were grounded in assumptions about 'real police work' and misogynist, racist, classicist and heterosexist (Hanmer, Radford and Stanko 1989) stereotypes about the 'deserving victim'[152]. Since 1986, the police have endeavoured to 'improve' their responses to rape and domestic violence through policy initiatives such as Home Office Circular 1990/60, that encouraged police service provision to centre on a more interventionist approach. Seemingly, these endeavours have been based on feminist centred research discourse that has argued that the police have "...abrogate[d] their protective role..." (Faragher 1985: 117) through their non-intervention in domestic violence. Certainly, developments such as DVOs and pro-arrest policies suggest that

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[151] It might be mentioned that some discussions do not distinguish between power and the consequences of power as the researcher does here. In some discussions the consequences of power come to be seen as power itself. One might deem this 'the chicken and egg question' – is it because agencies *have power* that they define local problems and solutions (et cetera) or is it through being definers (et cetera) that agencies *gain power*? Unfortunately, some discussions are uncertain on the 'chicken and egg question'. Take, Hague et al.'s discussions. These researchers claim that in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives "...less powerful agencies may feel overlooked, silenced, or disregarded..." (1995: 23). But Hague and colleagues are uncertain on whether it is ***because they have*** less power that such agencies are overlooked, silenced, et cetera or whether it is ***through being*** overlooked, silenced, et cetera that they have less power.

[152] See Chapter Two.

feminist arguments encouraging increased intervention have been mirrored in (and encouraged?) interventionist policy initiatives. Seemingly, then, there has been a transition, beginning on a *masculine* oriented position through a *feminist* oriented position and, it can be argued, this feminist position has lead to a further transition to a woman centred discourse. Essentially, though traditionally grounded in masculine stereotypes and assumptions, it seems that police service provision on domestic violence has become increasingly grounded in discourse that has emphasized women's protection and has propounded increased intervention[153]. Certainly, current police policy says:

> "...the duty of police officers when attending a domestic incident is to protect the victim and children (if applicable) from any further violence..." (Home Office 2000).

Further:

> "...it is imperative that the police deal effectively with domestic violence from the beginning..." (Home Office 2000).

Likewise, in the 1970s and early 1980s, other agencies' service provision on and around domestic violence seemed grounded in stereotypes and assumptions that marginalized women's opinions and needs[154]. Certainly, Maynard (1985) found that social workers made assessments about women that were grounded in assumptions about 'normal' personal and domestic characteristics. Likewise, Brailey (1985) found that stereotyped notions rather than women's needs determined housing departments' responses in domestic violence. More recently, though, it seems that service provision has become more grounded in discourse emphasizing women's needs than in individual and/or collective stereotypes. How has this happened?

On police service provision, some see interventionist responses as centred more on concern to secure public support for policing than on women centred discourse (Radford and Stanko 1991). Certainly, as per Stanko:

> "...the police have taken an active role in reassuring the public that they now 'take domestic violence seriously'. Policing domestic violence, at least in the UK, has become a crucial part of regaining waning public support..." (1995: 40).

Beyond this (rather pessimistic?) opinion, there are four issues that explain service provision's increasing grounding in women centred discourse. First, most agencies/organizations that engage in 'domestic violence service provision' are increasingly women centred organizations, such as Women's Aid Federation

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[153] Though, as seen in Chapter Two, some commentators have questioned whether increased intervention by the police protects women and as such whether arguments for increased intervention are necessarily 'women centred discourse' (see Hoyle 1998; Hoyle and Sanders 2000).

[154] See our extensive discussions in Chapter Two on other service providers' responses to domestic violence.

organizations, refuges, help-lines and community based support organizations[155]. Women's Aid Federation organizations espouse as 'foundation stones', 'self help', 'self-determination' and 'empowerment'. As these organizations are increasingly positioned on the service provision map, their women centred discourse is increasingly heard.

Secondly, there has been a "...rather sudden interest..." in training on "...the reality of the experience..." of domestic violence (Hague and Malos 1998: 168). Though under no circumstances a panacea[156], such training is increasingly "...the order of the day..." (Hague and Malos 1998: 168) and "...challenge[s] commonly held myths and assumptions..." (Humphries et al. 2000: 7). An associated point, thirdly, is that more and more policy makers are encouraging service provision to be grounded in women centred discourse. Certainly, government voices are ever louder on this:

> "...domestic violence is a crime and a very serious crime, which we as a Government are determined to bear down on with all the vigour at our command. A quarter of all women experience domestic violence at some point in their lives and it is most commonly experienced by women as a result of the actions of men..." (Boateng 2000).

Fourthly, on numerous issues service provision is increasingly grounded in *client* centred discourse. Certainly, criminal justice services increasingly see that service users boast *rights* as well as responsibilities. As per the JUSTICE committee:

> "...the advent of the Citizens' Charter and other charters, which set out the expectations which any citizen could have of official agencies, has...[meant]...the idea that individuals should have legitimate expectations of official bodies (including criminal justice agencies) is no longer strange..." (1998: 27).

So, service provision on domestic violence has become increasingly grounded in women centred discourse. How does this mean that power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches centres on access to women and children experiencing domestic violence?

Possibly, one might use Clarke et al.'s (1980) 'structural subordination' notion here. As per Clarke and colleagues, social work is 'structurally subordinate' to the other agencies to which it is connected because:

> "...social work derives its tasks and its orientations from these other agencies; its operational world is permanently defined in relation to their policies and practices..." (Clarke et al. 1980: 182).

Readers might remember that Sampson et al. use this notion to explain that, in multi-agency crime prevention, power centres on the police and housing departments:

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[155] See Chapter Two.

[156] Certainly, practitioners might attend training on domestic violence but continue their service provision 'business as usual'. More, Hague and Malos (1998) are concerned that training is rather ad hoc and is sometimes cut off from Women's Aid and the refuge movement.

> "...[the] dependency of state welfare agencies on other agencies invariably affords them, among other things, less legitimacy and less space for autonomous decision-making as they are in a less powerful structural position that the police and housing departments..." (1988: 484).

The researcher's conceptualization, in contrast, is that service providers' 'tasks' and 'orientations' on and around domestic violence have become defined (though perhaps not exercised) in relation to *women centred discourse* as service provision has become increasingly grounded in such discourse. Further, the researcher's conceptualization is that, as such, power centres on access to women and children experiencing domestic violence. Essentially, the researcher's conceptualization would upturn Clarke et al.'s (1980) 'structural subordination' notion.

Hence, the researcher's conceptualization questions discussions that assume a statutory/powerful versus voluntary/powerless distinction. More specifically, it questions discussions that assume a resourced/powerful versus under-resourced/powerless distinction. Seemingly, received opinion is that resources are power in multi-agency approaches. Certainly, Adam Crawford (1999) discusses police power in multi-agency crime prevention in resource terms and, examining multi-agency domestic violence approaches, Hague and colleagues discuss how refuges are "...small organisations, often under-funded, with little realistic power..." (1996: 61).

Unquestionably, agencies have differing human and material resources. This means in multi-agency (domestic violence) approaches that some agencies have numerous attendees but others do not (can not). Also, some agencies can fund multi-agency domestic violence initiatives – the Hillshire Probation Service funded the SDVF; the PCSP funded the PDVTG – and other organizations – Hillshire Police fund numerous Pittplace and Steelsite organizations through the CIP. Clearly, differential resources are important. Notwithstanding, on the researcher's conceptualization, more *resources* does not necessarily mean more *power*.

The researcher's broad conceptualization is, then, that power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches centres on access to women and children experiencing domestic violence because service provision on domestic violence is increasingly grounded in women centred discourse. As such, agencies' tasks are increasingly 'defined in relation to' this discourse. How is this conceptualization seen in Pittplace and Steelsite?

Power as Access to Women in Pittplace and Steelsite Initiatives.

Discussing their service provision, most Pittplace research interviewees said that service provision on domestic violence is increasingly grounded in women centred discourse. Pittplace police research interviewees certainly said that police service provision, once

centred on 'just a domestic' assumptions, is increasingly centred on interventionist discourses. Notwithstanding, some service provision in Pittplace did *not* seem grounded in women centred discourse. Certainly, *gender neutral* discourse appeared to characterize service provision in both the Pittplace Domestic Violence Group/Helpline and the Pittplace Women and Children's Refuge.

So, since Pittplace had domestic violence support organizations[157], there has clearly been a transition there, beginning on a *masculine* oriented position through a *feminist* oriented position. Some research interviewees said that there had been a further transition – a feminist oriented position to a *women centred* position. But, this further transition sometimes seemed moot – possibly, there had been a different transition to a *gender neutral* position? Possibly, some Pittplace organizations had service provision grounded in gender neutral discourse because, there, domestic violence has had and has increasing got a strong *crime prevention* association. Regardless, gender neutral discourse is a concern – domestic violence *does* centre on *men's* abuse of *women*.

What about Steelsite? Unquestionably, there had been a transition to a feminist oriented position in Steelsite – it had a Women's Aid organization; three community support organizations; a refuge; and an Asian women's refuge[158]. Further, service provision on domestic violence being grounded in a women centred discourse seemed much more certain in Steelsite. Perhaps, Steelsite having a 25-year-old Women's Aid organization is no coincidence here.

Possibly, in Pittplace and Steelsite there has been a further transition – women centred discourse to *gender sensitive* discourse (and, seemingly, practice). Though gender neutral discourse is worrying, gender sensitive discourse might be seen as encouraging as it sees that men cannot be marginalized. Gender sensitive discourse sees that, alongside service provision focusing on women's needs, programmes that focus on *men's* behaviour are needed – "...one of the most compelling arguments given for these programmes to be undertaken [has been] that not all women want to leave their partners – many just wan[t] the violence to stop..." (Eadie and Knight 2002: 168). Seemingly, both Pittplace and Steelsite had assumed a gender sensitive position. Each had organizations that worked with perpetrators and organizations representing men attended both the PDVTG and the SDVF – Action Against Men's Violence Steelsite attended each SDVF Full Forum meeting

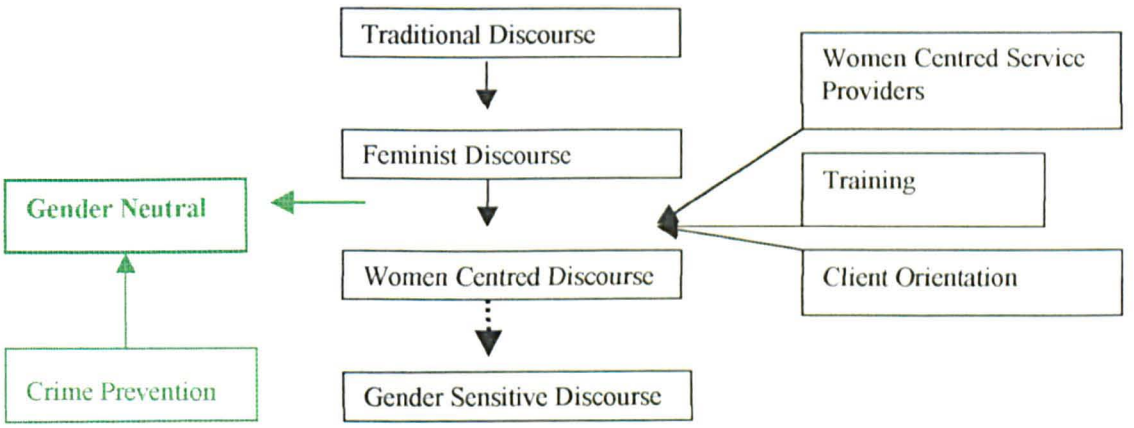
[157] See Chapters Three and Five.
[158] See Chapters Three and Five.

So, there has been a transition, beginning on a *masculine* oriented position through a *feminist* oriented position. There has been a further transition – a feminist oriented position to a *women centred* position. Yet, this further transition cannot be assumed. Certainly, in Pittplace it sometimes seemed moot that there had been a transition to a women centred position. Rather, it seemed there had been a transition to a *gender neutral* position. Finally, there seemed a further transition in Pittplace/Steelsite initiatives to a *gender sensitive* position. This position is encouraging.

These transitions are mapped out in Figure 6A.

So, how is the researcher's conceptualization that power is access to women and children seen in Pittplace and Steelsite? Since most service provision did seem grounded in women centred discourse in Pittplace, power might be conceptualized as access to women and the Refuge and the Group/Helpline seen as 'powerful'. Nonetheless, since *their* service provision sometimes seemed *not* grounded in women centred discourse and seemed grounded in gender neutral

FIGURE 6A: *Figure Showing The Transition In Discourse On Domestic Violence Service Provision.*



discourse, the Refuge and the Group/Helpline rather undermined their powerfulness. Since service provision did seem grounded in a women centred discourse in Steelsite, power might be conceptualized as access to women in Steelsite's multi-agency approaches and organizations accessing women could be seen to have power in these approaches.

Information, Knowledge and Expertise.

Secondly, differential power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches might be conceptualized as differential access to information, knowledge and/or expertise. Received opinion is that power differences in multi-agency approaches are centred on such differential access to information, knowledge and/or expertise (see Crawford 1999;

Gilling 1993, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2000). This opinion is unquestioned in the Pittplace/Steelsite research. In Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives, some had differential access to information, knowledge and/or expertise on domestic violence, funding and multi-agency approaches.

Domestic Violence.

As differential information/knowledge/expertise on crime prevention means differential power in crime prevention initiatives, so differential information/knowledge/expertise on domestic violence seems to mean differential power in domestic violence initiatives.

In Pittplace, it seemed uncertain who was a 'domestic violence expert'. Certainly, it sometimes seemed questionable that domestic violence organizations had information or knowledge or expertise on domestic violence. Under no circumstances could one see the Refuge representative's opinion on 'women with not everything up there' as 'informed' or 'knowledgeable' (on mental health issues or domestic violence). What about Steelsite? Organizations accessing women appeared expert on domestic violence in Steelsite. Though no attendee voiced a 'non-expert' opinion on domestic violence (as happened on more than one occasion in Pittplace[159]) in the SDVF, the information, knowledge and expertise of organizations accessing women stood out in SDVF meetings. These organizations dominated discussions in SDVF Full Forum meetings as domestic violence definitions and safety issues in domestic violence were discussed[160].

Funding.

Some Pittplace/Steelsite agencies were 'funding experts' – others were most uncertain on funding issues. As seen, 'funded' organizations were (had to be) experts on funding issues. Sometimes, but only sometimes, the funders also seemed expert on such issues.

Multi-Agency Approaches.

Finally, differential information/knowledge/expertise centred on multi-agency domestic violence approaches – some agencies and organizations had much more knowledge than others about initiatives themselves and 'multi-agency issues'. Knowledge of initiatives themselves usually centred on the initiative's outputs. Knowledge of multi-agency 'issues' increasingly centred on knowledge of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

More differences in knowledge on multi-agency approaches were seen in Pittplace – Steelsite agencies' knowledge on such approaches seemed much more matched.

[159] See, especially, discussions in the PMADVF.
[160] See, especially, our discussions on 'who talked' in the SDVF.

Certainly, both research observations and interviews suggested that SDVF attendees knew about the Forum's outputs, having pretty much the same knowledge. Also, though research interviews suggested that some attendees had more knowledge than others on the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, they did not suggest a *pattern* to this different knowledge. Any differences here were based more on the individual interviewee than their agency et cetera.

Which Pittplace agencies and organizations were experts on multi-agency approaches?

Unquestionably, the attendee most knowledgeable on the PDVTG's outputs was the BMBC Housing Department. Sometimes, it seemed that *only* this Department's representative – the PDVTG Chair – had this knowledge and that other attendees were uncertain.

Notwithstanding, since a main PDVTG output has been formulating the 'Pittplace Crime and Disorder Action Plan on Domestic Violence', the PCSP and PCSP representatives boasted increasing knowledge on the PDVTG's outputs. Finally, certain attendees had *much* more knowledge on crime and disorder provisions than others. Unsurprisingly, the PCSP had most such knowledge – a PCSP representative explained the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in a PDVTG meeting and a Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum (PMADVF) meeting and dominated most discussion on Pittplace's crime and disorder provisions in the PDVTG and the PMADVF. Seemingly, then, the PCSP boasted most knowledge on multi-agency approaches in Pittplace – on initiatives themselves and on multi-agency issues.

Summarizing who had more information or knowledge or expertise on domestic violence, funding and/or multi-agency approaches than whom in Pittplace/Steelsite initiatives, in Pittplace, it seemed moot that domestic violence organizations had information/knowledge/expertise on domestic violence, though in Steelsite it was unquestionable and unquestioned that such organizations were domestic violence experts. In both Pittplace and Steelsite such domestic violence organizations seemed informed, knowledgeable and expert on funding issues. Sometimes, funders also boasted funding knowledge. Finally, in Steelsite agencies were more matched, but in Pittplace it seemed that the PCSP commanded most knowledge on multi-agency approaches – on initiatives themselves and on multi-agency issues. Seemingly, on the received opinion that agencies and organizations boasting more information, knowledge and/or expertise also boast more power in multi-agency approaches, these 'experts' are powerful in Pittplace/Steelsite multi-agency domestic violence approaches.

What The Consequences Of Being 'Powerful' Are.

Much research discussion (Blagg et al. 1988; Sampson et al. 1988; Pearson et al. 1992; Gilling 1994; Crawford and Jones 1995; Crawford 1998, 1999) sees power as grounded in definitions – it is said that being powerful in multi-agency approaches is being a 'definer' of locations, problems, needs, responses and, as per Hague and colleagues, of attendance and participation through excluding and/or silencing others. Further, some discussions see powerfulness as grounded in 'shadow settings' – Crawford (1998, 1999; see Crawford and Jones 1995) has said that being powerful is being included in (or determining inclusion in) shadow settings. Pittplace/Steelsite research supports each assertion here.

Certainly, in Pittplace/Steelsite, 'powerful' agencies/organizations were 'definers'. In Pittplace, the PCSP seemed the main definer in Pittplace's multi-agency approaches as it increasingly defined domestic violence as a crime and disorder issue. Essentially, the PCSP defined 'the problem' as a crime and disorder one and the 'right solutions' as crime and disorder solutions and, further, defined Pittplace's multi-agency approaches as 'best' located in a crime and disorder location.

Possibly, as power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches increasingly centres on information/knowledge/expertise on crime and disorder, so domestic violence might be increasingly defined as a crime and disorder issue and solutions on it increasingly defined as crime and disorder solutions. Does this mean that domestic violence might be *decreasingly* defined as a Women's Movement issue? An associated point here is that this might mean that power as access to women and children becomes less important and power as access to information about the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 becomes more and more important. A further, and more important, point here is that power as information about crime and disorder might mean that solutions on domestic violence are *decreasingly* defined as *service provision* solutions. This, then, is a point that suggests that there was potentially a disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence. Should those with knowledge about the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gain more and more power in Pittplace initiatives, it remains a strong possibility that these initiatives might become increasingly focused on traditional preventative methods, meaning that service provision and women's safety are increasingly marginalized.

In Steelsite, organizations accessing women were definers. Organizations such as the Alpha Domestic Violence Project and Steelsite Rape and Sexual Abuse and Counselling

Service were 'definers' as the SDVF defined domestic violence. Readers might remember that these organizations directed and dominated May 2000 SDVF discussion on domestic violence definitions. Other attendees said *nothing*. Just once did another attendee voice a rather muted opinion – as someone encouraged that Hillshire Police's definition be amended, the police representative just said that "...yes, the definition might change..." (SDVF Observation 18.5.00.). Further, it seems that these organizations *did* define domestic violence – most opinions voiced here were mirrored in the SDVF's multi-agency strategy's domestic violence definition.

Domestic violence organizations directed and dominated other discussions. So, in May 2000 once more, the Alpha Domestic Violence Project, the Beta Domestic Violence Project and Steelsite Rape and Sexual Abuse and Counselling Service directed and dominated discussion on joint SDVF/University research. Interestingly, though, some Steelsite agencies that accessed women were not definers in the SDVF. A Steelsite Family Services Unit representative and a Gamma Domestic Violence Project representative each raised a discussion point in the March 2000 SDVF meeting, but each found their points rather dismissed[161]. Does this mean there is no guarantee that powerful agencies are definers? Possibly. Possibly, it means that agencies accessing black women or accessing men – not 'ideal victims'? (Christie 1986) – are *not* powerful. This possibility suits our power conceptualization that power is access to women because service provision is increasingly grounded in women centred discourse. Certainly, it sometimes seems that service provision on domestic violence is grounded in *white women* centred discourse. Notwithstanding, our broad assertion is that Steelsite organizations that accessed women were definers in the SDVF.

Finally, in both Pittplace and Steelsite, powerful agencies defined *atmospheres*. Perhaps this was best seen in where the two main initiatives met. Readers might remember that PDVTG meetings were held in Council buildings and, as the researched period ceased, in a PCSP building. Yet, the SDVF avoided meeting in 'big imposing rooms in the Town Hall' because 'the voluntary sector don't like that' (SDVF 18.5.00.).

Likewise, powerful Pittplace/Steelsite agencies were included in or determined inclusion in shadow settings. As, though, Pittplace/Steelsite shadow settings seemed less grounded in an ideology of unity and more grounded in an ideology of efficiency, these shadow settings also seemed less grounded in power than in personality. So,

[161] Readers might remember that the Family Services Unit representative questioned whether the SDVF is concerned with services for black women and the Gamma representative raised the point that it was facing a funding crisis.

though powerful agencies were included in or determined inclusion in shadow setting, less powerful agencies and representatives were also included as 'their faces fitted'. So, a SCC social service representative assisted the SDVF co-ordinator/development worker in developing a multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse. The social service department did not seem 'powerful' on our conceptualization but this representative's face clearly fitted.

Seemingly, power is grounded in another consequence. This researcher sees power as also being grounded in irreproachability – being powerful in multi-agency domestic violence settings is being irreproachable. Certainly 'powerful' agencies, especially Steelsite organizations accessing women, usually avoided reproach on and around their (poor) attendance. Certainly, Steelsite research interviewees did not mentioned these organizations as 'bad' attendees when questioned about good and bad attendance. Further, it is possible that a Pittplace Women and Children Refuge representative avoided reproach on her opinion that women 'with not everything up there' cannot make choices on their circumstances because, as an organization accessing women, the Refuge had 'power' in Pittplace's multi-agency approaches.

Power brings one further consequence. Arguably, with power comes more power. Adam Crawford (1999) sees that the consequences that power brings in multi-agency approaches *amplifies* powerfulness. Certainly, it seemed agencies that had power gained *more power* in Pittplace/Steelsite initiatives. Essentially, the consequences that power brought (defining et cetera) extended these agencies' powerfulness. So, as an example, the PCSP had power because it had knowledge on crime and disorder provisions. Because it had power, it increasingly defined domestic violence as a crime and disorder issue and solutions on domestic violence as crime and disorder solutions. Because its knowledge was increasingly *relevant* vis-à-vis other Pittplace attendees, its powerfulness was amplified.

Postscript.

Hitherto, our discussions have seen power and the consequences of power as agency issues and, as such, have rather marginalized *inter-personal* power in multi-agency domestic violence initiatives. Yet, there were *enormous* inter-personal power issues in Pittplace/Steelsite initiatives.

Certainly, in the SDVF, inter-personal power differentials were sometimes more seen than other power differentials. Here, the SDVF co-ordinator/voluntary sector

development worker had extensive personal power vis-à-vis other attendees, boasting access to women through, inter alia, sitting on Steelsite Women's Aid management committee and boasting extensive information/knowledge/expertise on domestic violence, funding and, unsurprisingly, the SDVF's outputs. The consequences of this inter-personal power mirrored the consequences of agency power. So, she appeared the main definer in the SDVF. As seen, she directed and dominated most discussions. Once she had become 'Voluntary Sector Development Worker' and another co-ordinator had been appointed, she continued to direct and dominate. Sometimes this direction and domination centred on when and how issues were discussed – often, it centred on *what* was discussed. Unquestionably, she had inclusion in shadow settings. Further, it seemed that she determined inclusion in such settings.

The PDVTG Chair's personal power seemed less pronounced than that of the SDVF co-ordinator/voluntary sector development worker though, once more, seemed extensive vis-à-vis other attendees. Though this Chair did not boast access to women, she did boast extensive information/knowledge/expertise on domestic violence and, especially, multi-agency approaches. As mentioned, she was, unquestionably, the attendee most knowledgeable on the PDVTG's outputs.

Throughout this discussion, it has been seen that power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches centres on access to women and/or access to certain other information/knowledge/expertise. Further, consequences of power are imposing one's definition on others, inclusion in (or determining inclusion in) shadow settings and avoiding reproach and that a main consequence of power is more power. Finally, it has been seen that, sometimes, inter-personal power is more seen than agency power.

As mentioned, though attendance, structures and outcomes were themes in Pittplace and Steelsite because issues are raised under them that lead to the researcher's main conclusion, power was a theme because it had to be on research about sexual violence, especially on research about multi-agency approaches in domestic violence. Nonetheless, one point raised here suggests that there was potentially a disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence. Because those with knowledge about the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 had power in Pittplace initiatives, there was potentially a disconnection between the initiatives and service provision because the possibility remains that these initiatives might become increasingly focused on traditional preventative methods, rather than service provision.

It should perhaps be mentioned, though, that, rather than mirroring discussions under the other three themes through suggesting a potential disconnection, our power discussions do not, in truth, sit comfortably with those other discussions. Clearly, our other discussions centre on an assertion that certain disconnections can be seen between partnership initiatives on domestic violence and service provision to women and their children. Yet, our power discussions centre on an assertion that service provision, or discourse on such provision, is essential in meaning that power can be conceptualized as access to women. Essentially, one assertion is grounded in the *marginalization* of service provision and the other is grounded in the *significance* of such provision, or discourse on it. It appears that one finding is that service provision is sidelined but another finding is that it is important enough to ground conceptualizations about power. So, although research discussions in Pittplace and Steelsite suggest there was potentially a disconnection between the initiatives and service provision as initiatives might become increasingly focused on traditional preventative methods, this suggestion does not sit comfortably with discussions that build the researcher's argument here.

6. Conclusion.

Chapter Six has done a number of things. First, it has reflected further on some especially interesting research findings set out in Chapter Five. The issues discussed here are especially interesting because each suggests a development in the research literature. Our discussions on informality in multi-agency approaches come to mind here, as do our discussions on 'consensus building'. On informality, the research in Pittplace and Steelsite found important differences in both what was discussed in informal settings and why such settings were happening. What was discussed in Pittplace and Steelsite informal settings was much less sensitive than suggested in past research discussions and why such settings were happening in Pittplace and Steelsite was much less grounded in an ideology of unity and much more grounded in an ideology of efficiency.

On this issue, the Hillshire research suggests a development in the research literature on partnership in crime prevention. On disagreement, the Hillshire research suggests a development in the literature on partnership in domestic violence too. The research in Pittplace and Steelsite finds consensus rather than conflict but research discussions on partnership in both crime prevention *and* domestic violence highlight conflict and disagreement as paramount.

Perhaps the most obvious issue on which the Hillshire research develops research discussions is power. Although some of the researcher's conceptualizations on power continue the thinking of past researchers, the conceptualization that power is access to women is clearly different to this thinking. Perhaps, in their reference to Women's Aid organizations having 'moral power' (see Chapter Two) in the initiatives they researched, Hague and colleagues saw the possible relevance of access to women in conceptualizations of power. Possibly, then, rather than signalling a *change* in thinking on power in *domestic violence* partnership approaches, the research in Pittplace and Steelsite signals more *clarity* in such thinking – it has pinpointed *why* Women's Aid and similar organizations might have power in such approaches. But because this pinpointing stands on its head Pearson and colleagues' conceptualization in *crime prevention* partnership approaches, the Hillshire research *does* signal a change in the thinking seen about partnership in crime prevention. Allowing for these nuances, though, the Hillshire research develops significantly previous research discussions on the issue of power.

Clearly, though, the Chapter has not just focused on those issues that develop the literature. Rather, much attention has been paid to the issues that suggest a disconnection in practice, a perceived disconnection or a causal disconnection. That is not to suggest that these issues do not, in themselves, develop research discussions. Certainly, throughout the Chapter, comparisons were made between the issues raised and other research discussions, largely so that the Hillshire research might find a location in the research literature. Sometimes, these comparisons supported the findings in Pittplace and Steelsite. Here, then, the Chapter highlights the issues that are, seemingly, seen again and again in research on multi-agency approaches. The second issue discussed in the Chapter is such an issue – seemingly, time and again research finds that abused women do not attend multi-agency initiatives and that it is through *organization* that a voice is gained on partnership initiatives. Other times, the comparisons suggested nuances on certain issues. Discussions here certainly suggested a third 'take' on feminization in partnership initiatives.

Perhaps more important are the discussions that suggest *differences*. Some comparisons did not support research findings in Pittplace and Steelsite and, here, the Chapter again highlights the changes in understandings on certain issues that the Hillshire research has brought about. The penultimate issue discussed in the Chapter comes to mind here –

since the Hillshire research, our understanding that initiatives 'improve' networking and interaction has changed somewhat.

So, this Chapter has reflected further on interesting research findings and has discussed issues that suggest a development in the research literature but much attention has been paid to those issues that suggest a disconnection in practice, a perceived disconnection or a causal disconnection. That is not to suggest, though, that these issues do not, in themselves, develop research discussions.

Nonetheless, though each *does* develop the literature through suggesting likenesses, nuances or differences, these issues were included here because each suggested either a disconnection in practice, a perceived disconnection or a causal disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision on domestic violence. By setting out the issues that suggest such disconnections, the Chapter essentially sets out the issues that lead to the main conclusion about multi-agency approaches to domestic violence in Pittplace and Steelsite – that multi-agency initiatives are not making women and children safer and, doing so, the Chapter sets out the foundations that the researcher's main conclusion is built on.

Perhaps the surprise in the Chapter is ***how many*** issues suggested these disconnections and *how few* issues challenged such a suggestion. As seen, the one issue that opposes the main argument that there was a disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision is that these initiatives wanted to improve service provision and encourage liaison on it. More obvious were those issues that did not sit comfortably with the assertion that there was an essential disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision in Pittplace and Steelsite. Most such issues could be found under the theme, power. As discussed, the conceptualization that power in multi-agency domestic violence approaches is access to women and children experiencing domestic violence because service provision is increasingly grounded in women centred discourse does not sit comfortably with other discussions in the Chapter that assert a disconnection between initiatives and service provision.

So, some issues did not suggest a disconnection between the initiatives researched and service provision and others did not sit comfortably with such a suggestion. Nonetheless, in discussing those (more seen) issues that suggest either a disconnection in practice, a perceived disconnection or a causal disconnection, the Chapter has set out the foundations that the researcher's main conclusion is based on. Because examining whether partnership approaches in domestic violence have made a difference has been a

main aim in the research and arguing that such approaches have made little difference has been a main aim in the thesis, Chapter Six assumes an important role in developing both the research and the thesis.

In discussing these three disconnections, though, the Chapter has also set out an approach that focuses on service provision as a main consideration in the argument. Here, then, the Chapter has broadened discussions. Chapter Five focused on the initiatives themselves – who attended, what was discussed and what was done in the research period. Chapter Six has broadened discussions by thinking about these issues in the context of service provision in Pittplace and Steelsite. By broadening discussions in this way, the Chapter has examined the role that partnership initiatives assume (or, as it seems, do not assume) in an area's service provision.

Summarizing, the Chapter has assumed an important role in developing both the research and the thesis. It has reflected further on issues, interesting because they suggest a development in the research literature and, in doing so, has increased our understandings about partnership approaches – a main aim in both the research and the thesis. It has set out issues that suggest certain disconnections but that also, in themselves, develop research discussions – again, meaning that it has increased understandings. Crucially, Chapter Six has set out the foundations that the researcher's conclusion is built on and, in doing so, has furthered the two main aims of the research. Clearly, these foundational issues increase understandings. They also relate specifically to whether or not partnership initiatives are making a difference – clearly, they also build the argument that, in fact, such approaches are not changing things. Finally, the Chapter has examined the role that partnership initiatives assume (or not) in an area's service provision.

Let us turn to examine how the issues discussed here lead to the main conclusion that multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence are not making women and children safer in the remaining Chapter, Chapter Seven.

Chapter Seven – Conclusion.

As we saw in Chapter Two, domestic violence is a *continuing abusive process* – it is continual and processual. Assaults are commonly repeated again and again and usually become more severe over time. More, domestic violence is not just *assaultive* behaviour – most women experience combined physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse and harassment. Essentially, domestic violence centres on a complicated pattern of abusive behaviour.

Readers might remember that the researcher conceptualized consistent service provision on domestic violence as comparable service provision throughout one agency (and one city et cetera) each time agencies are approached, whoever is approaching and whoever is approached. Hence, consistent service provision means that service provision is *not* mediated through issues of gender, ethnicity, (dis)ability, sexuality, socio-economic status or age and is, then, a minimum standard in domestic violence. Readers might remember further that the researcher sees that co-ordinated service provision centres on agencies reflecting on their service provision vis-à-vis other agencies' service provision. Clearly, it is important that service provision is co-ordinated – it is certainly important that police services grounded in arrest run alongside the provision of safe immediate, temporary and permanent accommodation. Notwithstanding, it is arguable that women need more.

Arguably, women and children need collaborative and/or multi-agency service provision. In collaborative service provision agencies 'do their own thing', though depend on other agencies in doing it. In multi-agency service provision agencies 'do their thing' working with other agencies. Collaborative and/or multi-agency service provision is needed because no organization, agency or service (however consistent their service provision) is equipped to provide each service that each woman in each domestic violence situation needs – women might need emergency services from the police and then services from hospitals, refuges, community support groups, housing services, et cetera. Further, rather than each agency, organization and service treating each 'case' in isolation, service provision that responds to and intervenes in the broad abusive experience is needed.

In inter-agency service provision, a further point is reached as agencies do more than their own thing and go past traditional service provision. One example of inter-agency

service provision is seen in Youth Offending Teams (YOTs)[162]. Could there be 'domestic violence teams', mirroring such YOTs? Arguably not, because each woman needs numerous services each time she is abused – one 'domestic violence team' could not house each service that each woman needs each time. Further, discussing attendance in Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives, the researcher voiced concern that problem issues might be 'hived off' into 'social problem' initiatives that are increasingly ghettoised. Arguably, a YOT model 'domestic violence team' raises the same concern. So, there could be no YOT model in domestic violence initiatives but collaborative and/or multi-agency service provision on domestic violence could be encouraged.

Do or could multi-agency domestic violence initiatives assume a role in planning this service provision? Multi-agency domestic violence initiatives in Pittplace and Steelsite did not assume such a role – no initiative researched assumed a role in planning service provision collaborative, multi-agency or otherwise on domestic violence in Pittplace or Steelsite. Certainly, though it produced a 'multi-agency strategy on domestic abuse', even the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum did not plan service provision que such. The Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum *aspired to* a role but did not *assume* a role in planning service provision on domestic violence in Steelsite[163].

Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives' disconnection from *planning* service provision on domestic violence reflected their broad *disassociation* from service provision on domestic violence. Essentially, the Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group and the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum were disassociated from Pittplace and Steelsite service provision on domestic violence. Further, *their* disassociation reflects a much *broader* disassociation between multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and domestic violence service provision. How has this disassociation occurred?

One reason is somewhat unsurprising. As seen in Chapter Two, domestic violence service provision is increasingly positioned in organizations that have their roots in the

[162] The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 demands that Youth Offending Teams 'YOTs' be established across the country to bring together relevant local agencies into a 'team' environment in delivering community-based interventions with and supervision of young offenders. Each local authority must establish at least one YOT, in co-operation with relevant police authorities, probation committees and health authorities (s 39 (1), (3)). Section 39 (5) states that each YOT will include at least one probation officer, local authority social worker, police officer, nominee of a health authority and of the local education authority, though, according to section39 (6), the local authority, in consultation with the police authority, probation committee and health authority, may include on the YOT such other person as it thinks appropriate.

[163] See our discussions on multi-agency domestic violence initiatives' outcomes.

women's movement such as refuges and community support organizations, but domestic violence is increasingly a 'buzz' issue in mainstream discourse and domestic violence development increasingly occurs in policy circles. So, the organizations providing services on domestic violence and the agencies at the centre of such discourse *are different*.

Another reason centres on the disconnections set out in Chapter Six. Perhaps these disconnections might be summarized. First, numerous issues were raised in Pittplace and Steelsite that suggested a *perceived disconnection* between initiatives and service provision. Seemingly, some agencies, organizations and/or services did not perceive (their attendance on) initiatives and their service provision as connected. So, in our earlier discussions on the attendance on the initiatives researched of multi-agency specialists and concerned individuals, we saw that attendance in Pittplace and Steelsite appeared to be seen as something that women and/or champions do and not something that agencies do – it appeared that agencies were 'palming off' attendance to women and/or champions and not examining why they as an agency were there. We also saw uncertainty in some Pittplace and Steelsite agencies about why they were there and what domestic violence meant to them and their service provision but we saw further that those agencies that *did* seem to be connecting their service provision were the ones that were not attending the initiatives researched or were poor attendees. Each issue suggested a perceived disconnection. Together, our discussions on attendance caused us to question just how much agencies, organizations and/or services problematize their attendance on multi-agency domestic violence initiatives vis-à-vis their service provision on domestic violence – do agencies really think through *who* should attend and *why* they should attend and, more, do they connect initiatives and their service provision?

Likewise, our discussions on outcomes in multi-agency approaches highlighted that some Pittplace and Steelsite interviewees were rather puzzled that agency connections, interaction and/or liaison could be based on multi-agency domestic violence initiatives – that some interviewees thought 'why would liaison be based on initiatives?'. More, they highlighted that some interviewees were *concerned* that connections/interaction/liaison on service provision could be based on initiatives – "...I would see that as kind of problematic..." (Interviewee 23). Once more, these discussions suggest a perceived disconnection between multi-agency domestic violence

initiatives and service provision on domestic violence – that attendees did not perceive that attendance on initiatives could or should be connected to their service provision.

Secondly, issues were raised that suggested a disconnection *in practice*. Seemingly, multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and domestic violence service provision *are* disconnected. Certainly, our discussions on attendance highlighted that some individual attendees on Pittplace and Steelsite initiatives did not provide services and that no abused women attended these initiatives in the research period – both issues suggested a disconnection in practice. Likewise, our discussions on multi-agency structures highlighted that Pittplace/Steelsite attendees did not commonly contact each other outside initiative meetings, especially on and around service provision. Seemingly, attendees did not contact each other because some agencies, organizations, services and/or representatives did not need to contact others on service provision and were, essentially, lone service providers – as one housing services representative said, "...we don't have to go to anyone else to find a property because we've go enough of those of our own..." (Interviewee 38); because some attendees were managers and did not see domestic violence day-to-day; and because of pragmatism – 'we work with whoever we can contact'. Further, discussions on outcomes highlighted that when attendees did contact each other outside initiative meetings, these contacts were only occasionally *based on* initiatives because some were already contacting others on service provision and did not need to contact initiative attendees and/or because some gained connections without the initiatives researched.

Thirdly, issues were raised that suggested a *causal disconnection* between initiatives and service provision. Certainly, our discussion of initiatives' aims highlighted that these aims are increasingly grounded in prevention *rather than* service provision. Likewise, our discussion of initiatives' outputs and outcomes highlighted that, though some aims *are* grounded in 'better service provision', these aims are essentially doomed as outputs and outcomes are sometimes *not* grounded in such better service provision. Essentially, these discussions suggest that initiatives themselves cause a disconnection between initiatives and service provision through undertaking service provision that is based more on personal goals and that competes with and threatens existing service providers; through competing for funding with essential service providers; and through not meeting women and children's needs, by either not discussing women or becoming ends in themselves.

Thus, discussions on attendance, structures and outcomes[164] suggest there is perceived and practiced disconnection between multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and service provision on domestic violence and that sometimes initiatives themselves cause this disconnection. These discussions lead the researcher to assume that there is a disassociation between multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and domestic violence service provision.

Figure 7A is a (somewhat mechanistic, it is conceded) representation of this disassociation.

The researcher does not intend, here, to suggest that this disassociation is the only important thing about the multi-agency initiatives researched. As seen in preceding Chapters, there were numerous interesting things happening in Pittplace and Steelsite. Some such issues were discussed in Chapter Six. Readers might remember that 'informality' seemed much less problematic in Pittplace and Steelsite than it has done in past research and that disagreement did not characterise the initiatives researched. Also, our discussions under the power heading highlighted that the current research has advanced understandings about multi-agency approaches (to domestic violence) in areas beyond the researcher's core conclusion. The researcher concedes that, in focusing on the perceived, practiced and causal disconnections in Chapter Six and on the disassociation between initiatives and service provision in this Chapter, these broader discussions are somewhat missed.

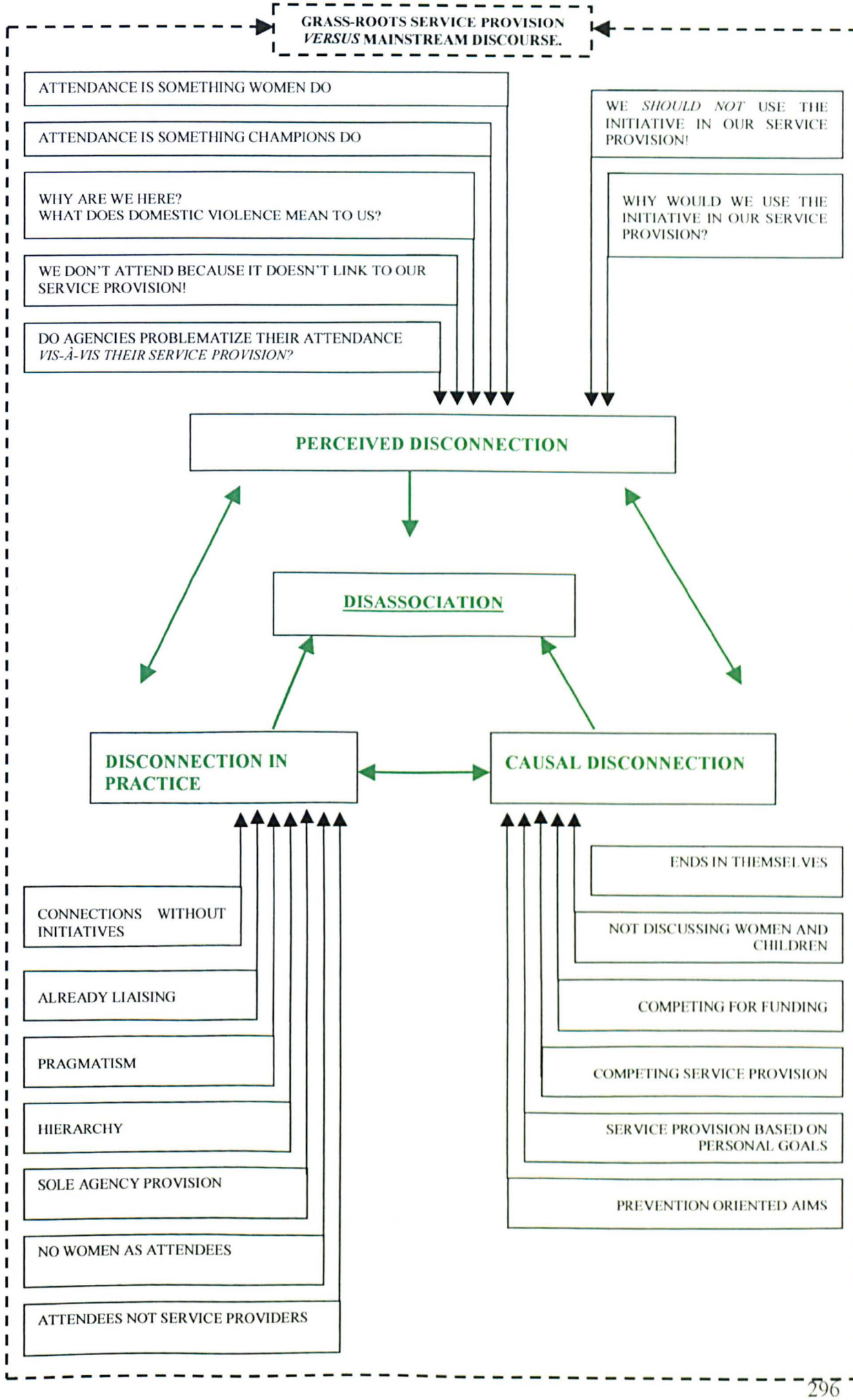
Clearly, in a word limited thesis, choices must be made about the discussions that should predominate and those that should be picked up again outside the main thesis. Further, a fine balance has to be reached between, on the one hand, appearing to be trapped in a mindset and, on the other hand, authoritatively asserting an important argument. And the researcher's argument that there is a disassociation between multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and domestic violence service provision *is* important because disassociation is such a concern.

Stopping domestic violence is paramount. As was said in one research interview:

> Researcher: "...do you think that there are any negative aspects to the multi-agency approach to domestic violence?..."
>
> Interviewee: "...the fact that we have to have one..." (Interviewee 39).

[164] Readers might remember that discussions on power suggested a *potential* disconnection – discussed further below.

FIGURE 7A: *The Disassociation Between Initiatives And Domestic Violence Service Provision.*



The goal that *must* underpin domestic violence approaches is *making women and children safer*. The role that service provision on domestic violence assumes in this goal, in stopping domestic violence and in making women and children safer, cannot be emphasized enough. Certainly, the services that a woman receives are essential in determining her safety. Appropriate service provision might mean a woman is in a better position to leave her abuser or change her abusive relationship. Fundamentally, appropriate service provision is essential in putting power and control back in women's hands – it is essential in meaning that *she*, and not her abuser, is in control. This fundamental argument centres on a point first introduced as Carolyn Hoyle and Andrew Sanders' (Hoyle 1998; Hoyle and Sanders 2000) discussions on police responses to domestic violence were set out (Chapter Two). Readers might remember that Hoyle and Sanders' discussions were useful in highlighting a dialectic of support and safety – in highlighting that women need empowering to be protected and supporting to be safe. The point that appropriate service provision is a means to prevention centres on the interactions between empowerment and protection and between support and safety.

Also, it should not be forgotten that women's help-seeking is reasoned – it is grounded in how *they* see their situation (see Lewis et al. 2000). Their approaching service providers means *they* see service provision as needed to better their safety. So, stopping domestic violence is paramount but the role that appropriate service provision assumes in making women safer cannot be emphasized enough. The disassociation between multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and domestic violence service provision is a big concern because it leads one to assume that such initiatives are not making women and children safer – how can they be when they are not associated with service provision?

Summarizing, no initiative researched assumed a role in planning service provision and this disconnection from planning service provision on domestic violence reflected a much broader disassociation between multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and domestic violence service provision.

Nonetheless, Pittplace and Steelsite multi-agency domestic violence initiatives were not 'talking shops'. Neither the Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group nor the Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum nor the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum

could be seen as a 'talking shop' – each had aims (and, as seen, outputs) grounded in more than joint talking[165].

The government sees multi-agency domestic violence initiatives as more than joint talkers. It has said that:

> "...whatever the work fora determine to cover, there should be clear aims and objectives, with measurable outcomes, and the work should be subject to monitoring and regular evaluation..." (Home Office 2000 et al.)[166].

Likewise, it channelled Crime Reduction Programme money through multi-agency domestic violence initiatives. Incidentally, the government is not alone in this – in the research period Hillshire Police began encouraging Community Initiatives Programme bids in Hillshire to go through the initiatives researched. Further, most research discussions encourage multi-agency domestic violence initiatives to be more than joint talkers. Discussing North-East England multi-agency domestic violence initiatives, Ruth Lewis is concerned that "...only four Forums organised their work according to a short or long-term programme. This pattern raises the danger of Forums *losing their way and becoming 'talking shops'* rather than focused and effective organisations..." (1998: 29. Italics supplied).

Clearly, the initiatives researched mirrored discourse that sees multi-agency domestic violence initiatives as, or encourages that initiatives are, more than joint talkers and joint talkers alone. Yet, since no initiative researched assumed a role in *joint planning* (on service provision) these initiatives were neither joint talkers nor joint planners – *they were neither one thing nor the other*.

How might initiatives assume a role in planning service provision on domestic violence?

First, initiatives might assume such a role were there more association between initiatives and service provision – more *association* between initiatives and service *provision* might be reflected in more *connection* between initiatives and service *planning*. How could there be more association between initiatives and service provision? Were agencies to connect their attendance on initiatives and their service provision or to see that attendance on initiatives could/should be connected to their service provision there could be more association. Likewise, there could be more association were there to be more connection *in practice*. Undoubtedly, there might be

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[165] Even the Pittplace Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Forum had aims centred on 'information sharing' and 'support' et cetera. See our discussion on multi-agency domestic violence outcomes, specifically our discussion on initiatives' aims and objectives.

[166] See Chapter One.

more connection in practice were agencies/organizations/services to found domestic violence officer posts. Certainly, though Pittplace/Steelsite attendees only occasionally contacted each other outside initiative meetings on and around service provision, these attendees *more commonly* contacted police Domestic Violence Officers. Likewise, multi-agency domestic violence initiatives could, themselves, encourage more connection between initiatives and service provision through developing and driving initiative inspired projects such as One-Stop-Shops or advocacy workers – essentially, through assuming a specified service planning role. Though each might found a much more essential connection between multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and service provision on domestic violence (and might centre on the collaborative and/or multi-agency service provision encouraged earlier), clearly, neither possibility is unproblematic. Certainly, the police Domestic Violence Officers role is not unproblematic (see Morley and Mullender 1994; Grace 1995; Plotnikoff and Woolfson 1998) and, regardless, a domestic violence officer role qua such might pose problems. Likewise, in discussion on outcomes, the problems encountered as initiatives themselves undertake service provision were examined and it was argued that these problems sometimes *amplify* disconnection between initiatives and service provision rather than *encourage* connection (as initiative inspired projects compete with established service provision et cetera). So, there *could* be more association, initiatives and service provision, but possibilities to encourage connection are not without their problems.

Regardless, it is unlikely that more association between initiatives and service provision could be reflected in more connection between initiatives and service planning as long as *resources* are held in agencies, organizations, and/or services and as long as these agencies, organizations and/or services remain *autonomous*. Essentially, agencies/organizations/services' resources and autonomy hinder multi-agency domestic violence initiatives assuming a role in planning service provision on domestic violence. So, as long as resources are held in agencies/organizations/services and agencies/organizations/services *themselves* assign and apportion those resources, initiatives *cannot* assume a role in planning service provision on domestic violence. Likewise, as long as agencies/organizations/services remain autonomous in their service provision, initiatives *can* plan service provision on domestic violence but *cannot* guarantee that their plans are not overlooked and/or overtaken.

Unsurprisingly, then, it is suggested, secondly, that initiatives might assume a role in planning service provision on domestic violence through being more *resourced* and *autonomous*. Certainly, were each to be resourced and to be accorded a role in and around decisions, multi-agency domestic violence initiatives might be better placed to plan services on domestic violence. Were this suggestion taken up, resourcing and 'autonomizing' should be *centred on* initiatives being better placed to plan services. Essentially, resourcing and 'autonomizing' should be grounded in a *mandate to* initiatives to plan services on domestic violence. Such a mandate might mean that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives were better placed to plan services through according them a position in strategic planning that agencies could not easily overlook or overtake.

So, initiatives might assume a role in planning service provision on domestic violence were they to be resourced and autonomized and, further, were they to be mandated *to assume* such a role. How might this suggestion appear in practice? Does the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 offer a good structure for planning service provision? Arguably not, because the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 might encourage multi-agency domestic violence initiatives to focus on prevention through means other than service provision. As discussed, prevention might occur through appropriate service provision but prevention might also occur through other means. Seemingly, the initiatives researched were focusing on these other means – inter alia, awareness raising through drama initiatives, leaflets, booklets, posters focused on women as well as the community. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 seemed to encourage these initiatives to focus increasingly on prevention through other means. Certainly, the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum put in a bid to the Home Office's Crime Reduction Programme because Steelsite's crime and disorder partnership, the Safer Steelsite Steering Group, *told it to* and the Pittplace initiatives were most keen to bid to this Programme[167]. Had the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 encouraged a sense in Pittplace and Steelsite that prevention in domestic violence is centred on the *Home Office* and not *initiatives' attending agencies*? So, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 does not offer a good structure for planning service provision.

How, then, might the suggestion that initiatives assume a role in planning service provision on domestic violence through being resourced, autonomized and mandated appear in practice? These resourced and autonomized initiatives could not assume a

[167] Against its better judgement, the Pittplace Domestic Violence Topic Group did not bid because the Steelsite Forum was bidding.

role around service planning *and* a role around support et cetera since planning service *provision* and supporting service *providers* can be seen as somewhat at odds – a multi-agency initiative cannot, in one breath, deem a project less worthy of funding and, in another breath, support it. So, resourced and autonomized initiatives could assume a role around service planning but these initiatives could be joint planners and joint planners only. *Other* initiatives could focus on support. Clearly, this suggestion appears much as Pittplace and Steelsite *see themselves*. The joint planning versus joint support et cetera role mirrors Pittplace's vision that the Pittplace Topic Group is 'a strategic group' and the Pittplace Multi-Agency Forum is a 'practice-oriented group, providing networking, information-sharing and support'. Likewise, it mirrors Steelsite's vision that the Steelsite Domestic Violence Forum's Management Committee centres on joint planning, the Full Forum centres on information sharing et cetera and the Women's Support Section centres on support. A clear distinction between the joint planning and the joint support role did not, though, appear in practice since multi-agency approaches in Pittplace and Steelsite were neither one thing nor the other: neither something or nothing.

So, in future, there might be a differentiation of function – resourced and autonomized initiatives might assume a role in planning service provision, with other initiatives assuming a role centred on support. These other initiatives *could* be numerous. There is no problem in principle in these other initiatives being numerous, other than the earlier conclusion that there is sometimes confusion, duplication and competition in areas with more than one multi-agency domestic violence initiative. The resourced and autonomized initiatives, though, could not be numerous – just one initiative in each area should assume a role in planning service provision.

Incidentally, without question, were this suggestion taken up, resourcing should be government funded (national or regional). Certainly, as discussed in the outcomes theme in Chapter Six, it is unacceptable that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives compete with domestic violence support organizations et cetera for funding. Were initiatives to assume a role in planning service provision on domestic violence through being more resourced, this resourcing could not be gained through such competition – unquestionably, it should be government funded.

Clearly, neither suggestion – firstly, more connection between initiatives and service planning through more association between initiatives and service provision and, secondly, initiatives assuming a role in planning service provision through being more

resourced and autonomous – is entirely novel. Recent developments are centred on connections between multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and specified service planning on domestic violence. Indeed, numerous Crime Reduction Programme funded projects centre on multi-agency domestic violence initiatives planning and providing certain, specified services.

Yet, the conclusion that encouraged the suggestions does not seem to have been heard already. The conclusion – that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives and domestic violence service provision are disassociated – has not been heard, and has certainly not been heard loudly, in research discussions that sometimes assume that initiatives and service provision 'must be' associated. Perhaps it is through questioning this assumption that the research conducted in Pittplace and Steelsite and documented in this thesis has most obviously advanced research discussions on and around multi-agency approaches to domestic violence. Certainly, through questioning this assumption, the research has also questioned the assumption that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives 'must be' making a difference. The research in Pittplace and Steelsite has advanced research discussions because it puts us in the position to conclude that there has been 'radical change but no change at all'.

How else has the research advanced understandings in the area?

Clearly, the research has *increased* understanding. As seen in earlier discussions, though increasingly seen as a panacea in government circles, the multi-agency approach to domestic violence has remained rather unexamined. The research in Pittplace and Steelsite has increased understandings in the area because it has examined an otherwise unexamined issue and, indeed, has advanced the literature through highlighting differences between the initiatives discussed in other research and those researched here and through pushing conceptual boundaries on issues such as power. The research in Pittplace and Steelsite has also been a *broader* examination than other research on the issue, because it has been interested in whether and how multi-agency domestic violence initiatives *bring change*. Rather than just examining initiatives in themselves, it has positioned discussion on multi-agency domestic violence approaches in much broader discussions about the most appropriate intervention in domestic violence and the 'best' responses to women and their children. The research has also been a broader examination in that it has thought about where developments on domestic violence, including multi-agency approaches, fit into broader developments on crime and crime reduction. Again, then, rather than just documenting certain initiatives in a certain time

period, the research has highlighted that domestic violence, once a women's liberation movement issue, is increasingly a (mainstreamed) crime reduction issue.

On both these broader issues, though, the research has highlighted the need for further examination. Here, then, suggestions might be made about future research. Further examination is needed around the transition, seen in both policy and in practice in Pittplace and Steelsite, to a crime prevention focus. Perhaps, five years after the research period commenced, it is a good time to examine whether and how the seemingly increasing association with traditional crime prevention has continued in the research areas. Are the initiatives' aims and outputs, for example, more or less centred on traditional crime prevention means? Also, is the association with mainstream crime prevention seen in other areas?

At the same time, further research is needed on the disassociation, seen so clearly in the research in Pittplace and Steelsite. Has it become even more pronounced? Moreover, is the disassociation between initiatives and service provision seen in Pittplace and Steelsite linked to the increasing focus on crime prevention in domestic violence? Have, indeed, crime prevention initiatives themselves become divorced from service provision? What role has, does and will the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 play here? The research in Pittplace and Steelsite suggests that the Crime and Disorder Act might amplify the disassociation but this suggestion needs further examination.

On whether and how multi-agency domestic violence initiatives bring change, further examination in needed on such initiatives and service provision. An obvious issue that remains outstanding is how initiatives might assume a role in service planning. Some suggestions are set out in this Chapter but how are these suggestions received in agencies, in initiatives themselves and, indeed, in other organizations? Are there other suggestions? Clearly, greater understanding is needed about what service providers think about this issue. Perhaps, greater understanding is also needed about service providers' (both agencies' and individuals') thoughts on their collaborative service provision – such an examination might begin in agencies and organizations rather than with partnership initiatives and their attendees. Another main issue that remains outstanding is the role that such initiatives assume in the service provision of grass-roots workers in both statutory and voluntary agencies and organizations.

More immediately, the conclusion of the Hillshire research raises serious questions that multi-agency domestic violence initiatives themselves and those favouring more and more such initiatives – most obviously the government, that wants "... within five years,

to see effective multi-agency partnerships operating throughout England and Wales..." (Women's Unit 1999: 2) – must consider most carefully. A key question for these initiatives and their supporters is 'is women and children's safety improved through multi-agency domestic violence initiatives?'. Since multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence and service provision on domestic violence are disassociated, the answer has to be 'no'. As has been argued, how can women and children's safety be improved through multi-agency domestic violence initiatives when these initiatives are not associated with service provision? Yet, this question *must* underpin domestic violence approaches, multi-agency or otherwise – the goal that *must* underpin domestic violence approaches is *making women and children safer*. Essentially, no approach that does not improve service provision on domestic violence and does not mean that women and children's safety, be that immediate, temporary or future, is improved can be supported. The study on multi-agency approaches to domestic violence in Pittplace and Steelsite leads the researcher to conclude that, unless and until multi-agency initiatives on domestic violence have more association with service provision on domestic violence, these initiatives cannot make women and children safer. As such, the researcher cannot and does not support current multi-agency domestic violence approaches.

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