



**UNIVERSITY OF  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**



**A multi-year examination of the  
Business Crime Reduction Partnership  
'Gloucester City Safe'**

**Conducted by a research team from the School of  
Natural and Social Sciences, University of  
Gloucestershire**

**February 2018**

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## **Executive Summary**

This report presents the findings from a multi-year examination of the Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) 'Gloucester City Safe'. This BCRP was designed to tackle crime, disorder and anti-social in Gloucester, Stroud and the surrounding areas. Its 140 business members work in partnership with the Police, Local Authorities and other stakeholders to tackle issues such as shoplifting, theft, anti-social behaviour, alcohol related disorder, street drinking and begging through the application of a two-tiered sanction-based exclusion system.

Since 2014, the University of Gloucestershire has worked with Gloucester City Safe (hereafter 'the Scheme') on collaborative research projects designed to consider the Scheme's operation and effectiveness and to generate insight in to public views on crime and safety. In October 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 student researchers conducted public surveys in Gloucester City Centre (totalling 2167 responses over the four years) and interviewed some of the Scheme's members (149 interviews conducted in total). Analysis of the 4523 incidents reported to the Scheme and of the sanctions issued by the Scheme between 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017 was also conducted.

This report has been produced to help shape community crime reduction activity. The report's findings can be used by the Scheme's management and the police to enhance understanding of crime and disorder in Gloucester and its surrounding areas and to help inform efforts to tackle these issues. There is also much in this report that could be applied to other community crime reduction initiatives operating in other locations. The main findings from the report are summarised here against the project's aims.

### **Using Scheme incident data to examine the crime and disorder experienced by the Scheme's members**

As more businesses have joined the Scheme so more incidents have been reported to its manager. However, the spatial and temporal distribution of incidents was not even. Incidents (both generally and when considering specific types of incidents) were more likely to occur in particular places and at particular times. 'Shoplifting and theft' and 'attempted theft' tended to occur during day time trading hours, peak during the afternoon and be consistent throughout the week, mirroring the time periods when there is opportunity for these incidents, and taking place at the locations where these offences are possible. 'Public order' and 'violent offences' tended to peak in the evening and during the night respectively, and increase throughout the course of week, taking place predominantly at licenced locations. Incidents were not evenly spread across member locations, and ten members had each reported upward of 100 incidents representing 53% of all incidents reported to the Scheme during the data collection period.

### **Public perceptions of crime, safety, policing and the Scheme**

The 2017 public survey generated insight in to public perceptions on issues of crime and safety in Gloucester city centre. 'Anti-social behaviour' was viewed as the biggest crime problem in the centre, and 'drugs' as the biggest cause of crime. A majority (64%) of respondents rated their feelings of safety during their visit to the city centre as '6' or above (on a scale of 1-10 where 10 was 'completely safe'), and a slight majority (55%) of respondents described the police as 'effective' in their efforts to tackle crime in Gloucester city centre. Roughly half (48%) of respondents in 2017 were aware of the Scheme, and 75% of these respondents viewed the Scheme as effective at tackling crime in Gloucester city centre.

### **Benefits and effectiveness of the Scheme**

Almost all members expressed positive sentiments about the Scheme, and many noted that the Scheme had delivered a reduction in crime. Members particularly valued the radio network, the secure web platform and the Scheme manager's communications, and spoke positively about the increased sense of awareness concerning known offenders that these resources provided.

Members stated that the scheme worked as a deterrent and offered an effective way of controlling access to their premises. Indeed, analysis of the sanctions issued through the Scheme revealed that the large majority (83%) of offenders did not commit further incidents after receiving a first sanction through the Scheme. It is also arguable that 395 incidents were avoided between 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017 through the enforcement of exclusions.

Scheme membership brought with it a strong sense of community cohesion for its members. With this community cohesion came feelings of safety and security. Members associated great value with the connections that the Scheme provided to other scheme members and to the scheme management, and many reported feeling less isolated as a result of these connections. The communication facilitated by the radios and secure web platform played an important part in this.

### **The issue of repeat offenders**

Repeat offenders were found to be causing major problems for some of the Scheme's members. Of particular note is the finding that 34 individuals (2% of total offenders) had committed 20 or more offences each, constituting 1411 (31%) of the total incidents reported. The twice-sanctioned offenders were more likely to attempt shoplifting and theft and commit incidents of being on the premises while banned but were less likely to commit public order offences and violent offences than other offenders.

The fact that so many incidents are committed by such a small number of individuals is not a characteristic unique to the city of Gloucester. Despite the Scheme's efforts here, and the fact that many further incidents are no doubt prevented due to the high effectiveness of the Scheme's information sharing network, it may well be the case that additional action is required to tackle the issue of repeat offenders. The recent introduction of City Protection Officers and the increasing use of Criminal Behavioural Orders in the city may already have made a positive impact on this.

### **The future of the Scheme**

There is no doubt that the Scheme has experienced a number of crime reduction successes and offers many benefits to its members. The Scheme's manager, Rich Burge, has worked hard with others to raise the Scheme's public profile and increase its membership numbers, both of which have been significant to the success of the Scheme. However, maintaining a position where the threat of exclusion carries such weight requires considerable community buy-in and sustained effort. The effectiveness of the Scheme as an information sharing network and as an offender deterrent relies in part upon high levels of public and business awareness. It is vital, therefore, that efforts are continued to raise awareness of the Scheme, to share and promote success stories and to grow membership, and that sufficient funds and resources continue to be dedicated to these activities.

# 1. Background, overview and report aims

## 1.1. Scheme background

The Gloucester City Safe Scheme (hereafter the Scheme) is a not for profit business crime reduction partnership (BCRP) designed, according to its website (2017), to help reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. The Scheme operates during the hours of both the Day Time (6am-6pm) and Night Time (6pm-6am) Economies, and its members are the businesses, restaurants, bars, retail establishments and transport services operating in Gloucester and nearby areas that have chosen to join the Scheme. Membership costs £1 day. There were 24 members when the Scheme was first launched in May 2014, and in February 2018 there were around 140 members.

The Scheme's manager and its members work in partnership with the Police, Local Authorities and other stakeholders to tackle local occurrences of issues such as shoplifting, theft, anti-social behaviour, alcohol related disorder, street drinking and begging. Members commit to using and enforcing an exclusion-based sanction system and have access to an information sharing network. The exclusion-based sanction system has two tiers. Members can issue 'yellow cards' to persons in or near their premises who they deem to have committed an offence (in line with the classifications of crime and associated behaviour employed by the Scheme). A first yellow card is a warning and a second yellow card results in an exclusion (sometimes referred to as a red card) which applies to all member premises. The sanctions that are issued by members are recorded by the Scheme's manager and logged in an incident database. Information is communicated to and between members via a secure radio network, a secure website and through regular email updates from the Scheme's manager. The secure website holds information on those who have received sanctions, invites members to help identify unknown offenders caught on camera, provides information on other relevant news and holds a directory of members.

## 1.2. Overview of approach

The data for this case study comes from a multi- year examination of the scheme undertaken by the Social Sciences team at the University of Gloucestershire. This examination draws upon three sources of data. The first source of data is a series of surveys used to examine public perceptions of the Scheme. The surveys were conducted in Gloucester City Centre in October 2014 (receiving 247 responses), October 2015 (receiving 619 responses), October 2016 (receiving 560 responses) and October 2017 (receiving 741 responses). The most recent survey, which can be viewed at Appendix 1, also contained questions on crime, safety and police effectiveness.

The second source of data is a series of semi-structured interviews (149 in total) with the Scheme's members (i.e. the business involved in the Scheme) conducted in October 2014 (where 31 members were interviewed), October 2015 (where 41 members were interviewed), October 2016 (where 35 members were interviewed) and October 2017 (where 42 members were interviewed). An employee representing each business (the exact position of which would vary depending on availability and knowledge of the Scheme) was asked questions concerning their experience of using the Scheme, its effectiveness, strengths and limitations, the benefits it offers and the ways in which it could be improved. The interview script used in 2017 can be viewed at Appendix 2.

The final source of data is a database containing a record of every incident of crime, disorder and associated behaviour reported by members of the Scheme to its manager, and of every sanction



issued through the Scheme. Spanning 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017, the dataset contains records from 3138 reports concerning 4523 incidents committed by 1433 individuals at 88 locations. The Scheme's manager would classify an incident using a list of 34 different crime related categories. For this report, incidents have been re-categorised using police recorded crime classifications and are presented using 10 distinct crime and associated behaviour categories (see Appendix 3 for conversion table). The only exception to this process was the category of 'Being on the premises while banned', which was the term used when individuals who had previously received an exclusion through the Scheme entered one of the Scheme member's premises. Those who are reported to have committed the incidents recorded by the Scheme are referred to as 'offenders' in this report.

### **1.3. Report aims and structure**

This report has four aims, each of which forms the focus of a section of this report. The aims of this report were:

1. To generate insight in to patterns of crime and disorder experienced by the Scheme's members through an analysis of the incident data gathered by the Scheme
2. To examine public perceptions on issues of crime, safety, policing and the work of the Gloucester City Safe Scheme
3. To examine the benefits and effectiveness of the Scheme according to its members and using data on the sanctions issued through the Scheme
4. To examine the issue of repeat offenders

The report concludes by summarising the main findings and considering their combined implications for the future of the Scheme and for effective practice in business community crime reduction partnership working.

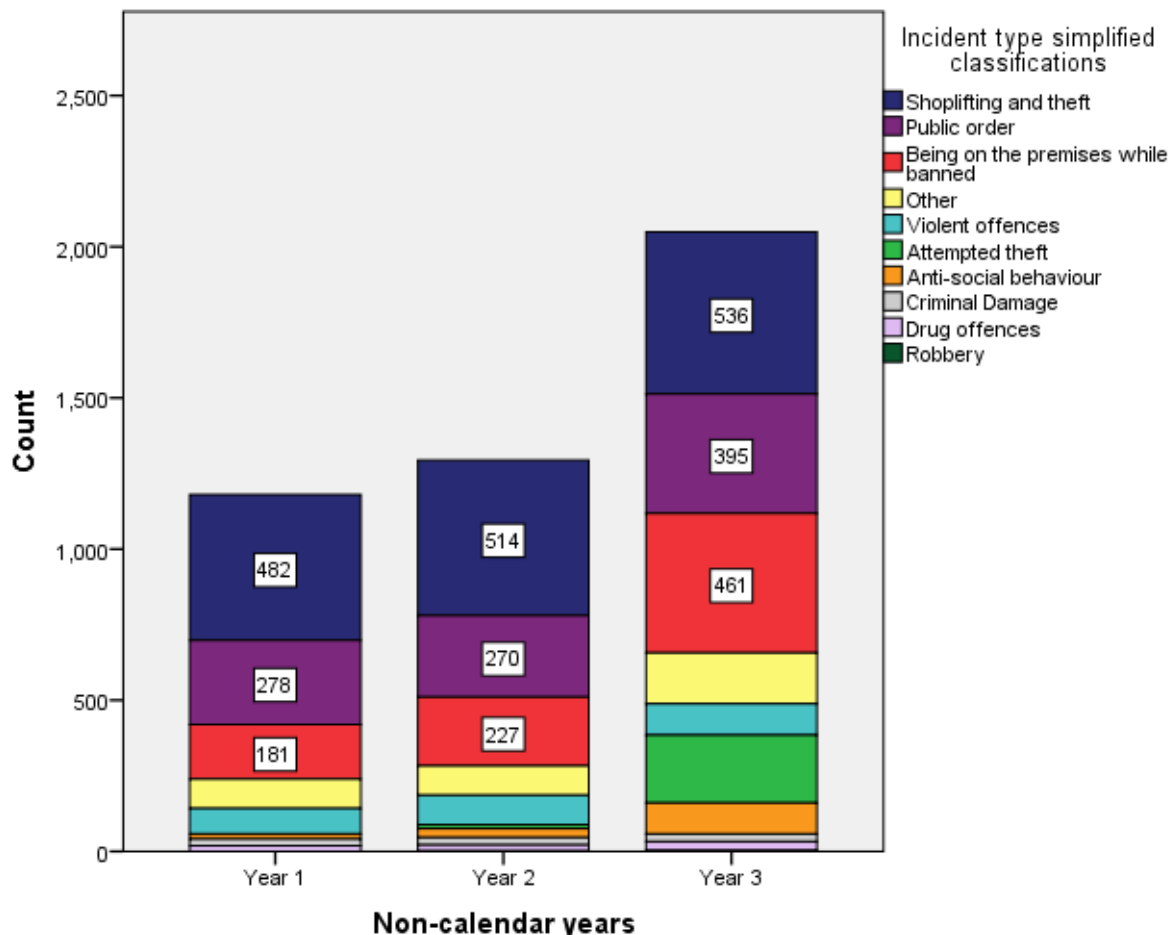
## 2. Using Scheme incident data to examine the crime and disorder experienced by the Scheme's members

This section uses the Scheme's incident data to generate insight into crime and disorder experienced by the Scheme's members. An 'incident' is the term used in this report to refer to a single occurrence of a behaviour recorded by the Scheme. Usually reported via email or through the Scheme's secure web platform, a member would provide the Scheme's manager with information on the time, date, location and nature of an incident, the names of those involved (if known) and a narrative of the proceedings. Although every incident is considered separately in this analysis, a single report to the Scheme's manager could concern more than one type of incident (for example theft and public order).

### 2.1. What is reported to the Scheme?

Figure 1 shows the total volume of incidents reported during each data collection year: Year 1 (June 2014-May 2015), Year 2 (June 2015-May 2016) and Year 3 (June 2016-May 2017). It also shows the total volume of each incident type reported to the Scheme by data collection year:

Figure 1: Number of incidents reported in each non-calendar year by incident type



The number of incidents reported to the Scheme has increased considerably over the three years, most significantly from year 2 (1294 incidents reported) to year 3 (2049 incidents reported). The most common incidents over the three years were 'Shoplifting and theft' (1532), 'Public order' (943) and 'being on the premises while banned' (869). Five of the 10 incident types were reported at similar levels across the three years ('Criminal damage', 'drug offences', 'robbery', 'shoplifting and



60 incidents were reported each hour between 11:00 and 17:59 with a peak of 89 between 16:00-16:59), followed by a more gradual decrease up until 11:59. Rates of both 'public order' offences and 'violent offences' follow similarly shaped trajectories across the 24 hour period, both experiencing sharp rises followed by peaks between 00:00 and 03:59 with more moderate yet consistent levels during the afternoons. Incidents of 'attempted theft' mainly occurred during daytime trading hours and were at their highest during the afternoon (peaking at 37 between 16:00-16:59).

Figure 3: Incidents reported to the Scheme organised by day of the week

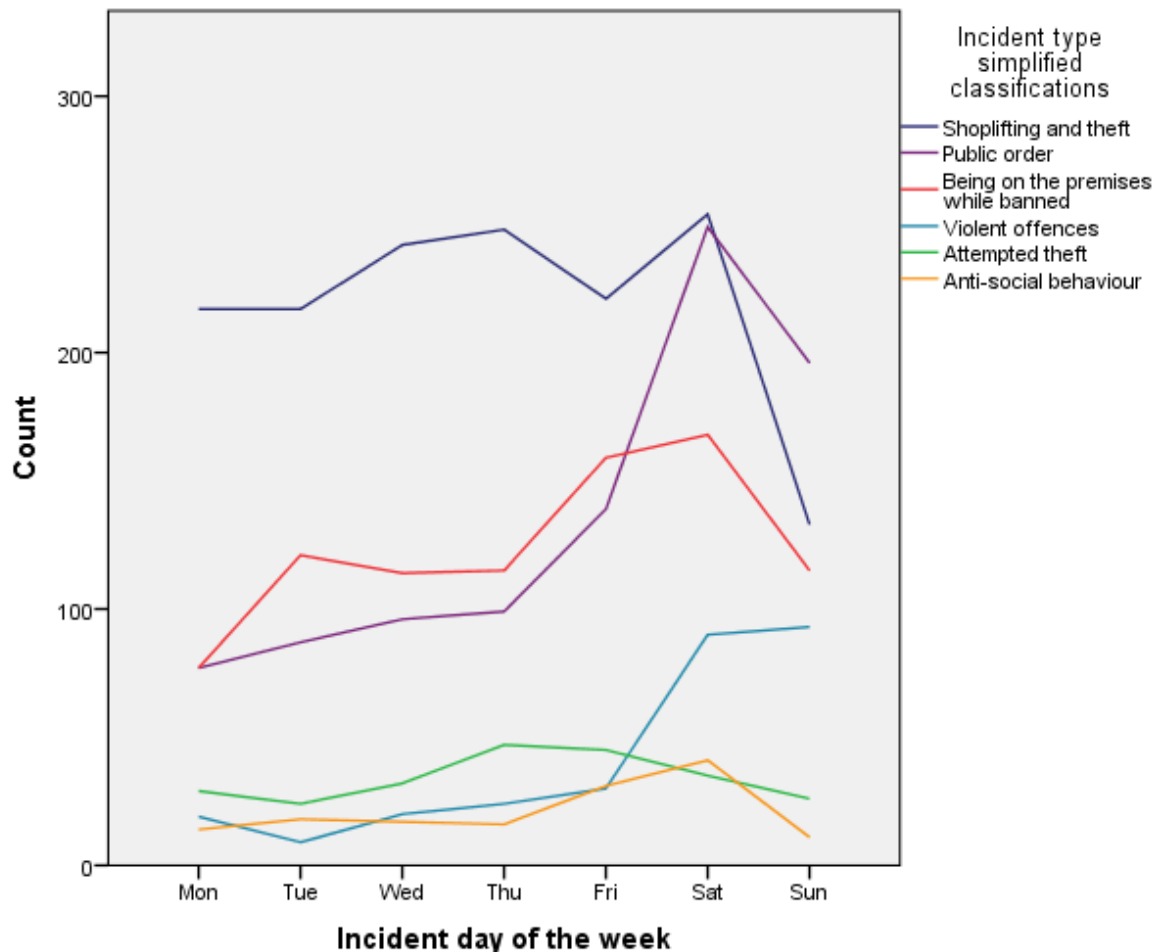


Figure 3 shows that total numbers of reports of 'shoplifting and theft' across the three years were in excess of 200 incidents on every day of the week bar Sunday. The fewest reports of 'public order' offences occurred on Mondays (77 incidents), but this rate would typically increase as the week progressed and be at its highest on Saturdays (249 incidents). Although the range was less, reports of 'being on the premises while banned' followed a similarly shaped trajectory, peaking on Saturdays with 168 incidents. Reports of 'violent offences' on the Saturdays and Sundays in the data period were more than three times higher than on a weekday, and reports of 'anti-social behaviour' and 'attempted theft' were at a fairly consistent rate throughout the week.

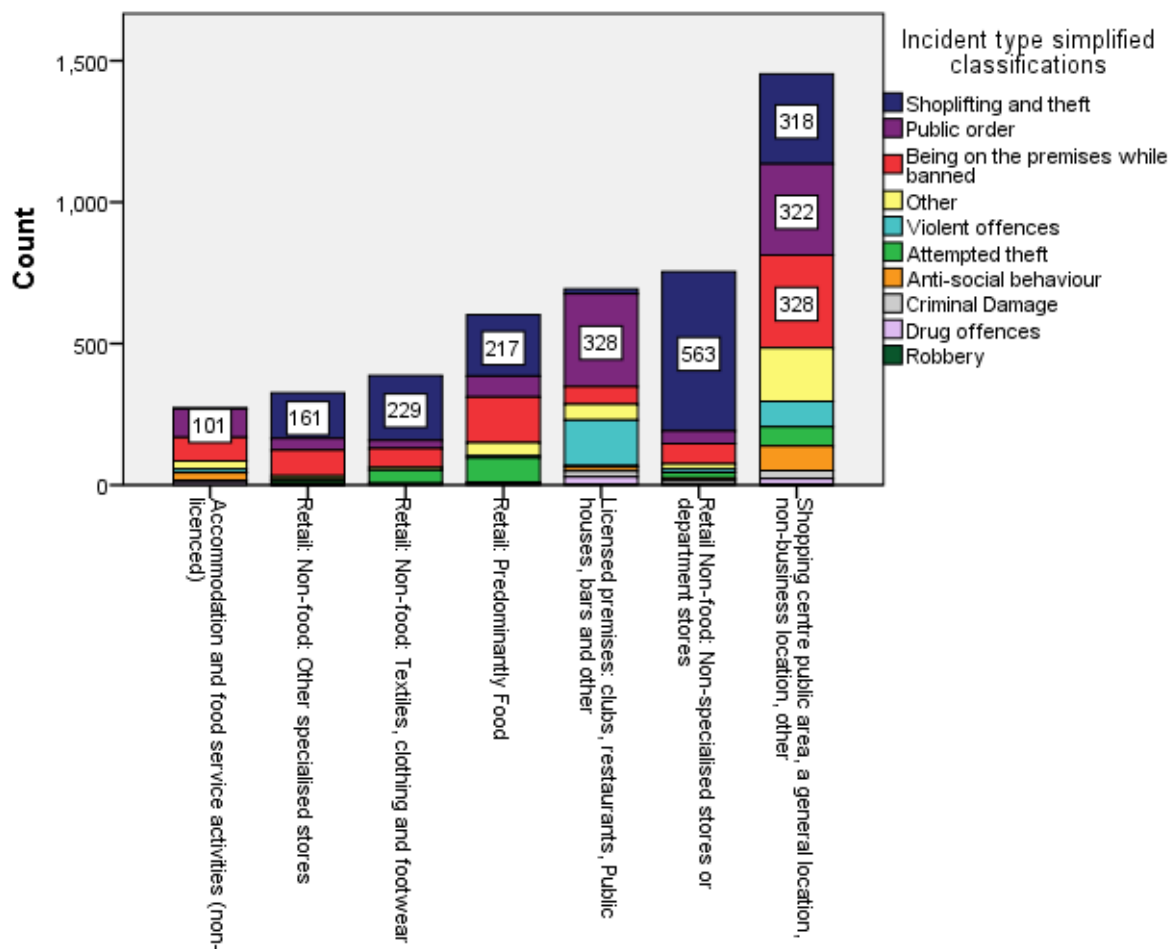
Although the temporal data facilitated further analysis of incident frequency by date and month this did not reveal any significant patterns or trends. Incident frequency for each date within the months in the data period was fairly consistent, with some small observable rise in reports of 'shoplifting and theft' during the middle third of a month and in reports of 'violent offences' at the start and end of a month. Similarly, analysis of incident frequency by calendar month revealed that rates were fairly

consistent throughout the year, and that incidents (both in total and by individual classification) were not more or less frequent during particular months.

### 2.3. Which types of incidents occur where?

Incidents were not evenly spread across member locations. Ten members had reported upward of 100 incidents over the data collection period. 2396 incidents were reported by these members, representing 53% of all incidents reported to the Scheme. There was also variation in the type of incident occurring at each location. To explore this, members of the scheme have been anonymised and categorised using classifications based on the 2015 Standard Industrial Classifications of economic activities, with an additional category added to cover the shopping centre public areas, public places and non-business locations that are included as ‘members’ of the Scheme. Figure 4 presents incident type against business type.

Figure 4: Incidents occurring at business locations organised by business and incident type



1453 incidents occurred in shopping centre public areas (i.e. not within a particular business premises), in public places, in non-business locations or in a location recorded as ‘other’ by the Scheme’s management (which usually refers to a non-member premises). The incidents reported most frequently in these locations were the same three reported most commonly to the Scheme overall: ‘shoplifting and theft’, (318 incidents) ‘public order’ offences (322) incidents, and ‘being on the premises while banned’ (328 incidents). 59% of all ‘anti-social behaviour’ incidents reported to the Scheme occurred in these locations. 563 (75%) of the 754 incidents reported to have occurred in

'Non-specialised stores or department stores' concerned 'shoplifting or theft'. 490 (71%) of the 693 incidents reported in Licensed premises concerned 'public order' (328 incidents) and 'violent offences' (162 incidents). Food retailers, textile retailers and 'other specialist stores' all reported similar proportions of 'shoplifting and theft', 'public order' and 'being on the premises while banned' incidents. Reports of 'attempted theft' were most commonly made by the members in the 'Retail: Predominantly food' category (86 of 238 reports).

### 3. Public perceptions of crime, safety, policing and the Scheme

This section of the report uses survey data to illustrate public views on crime and safety in Gloucester, on police efforts to combat these issues, and on the Gloucester City Safe Scheme. The majority of the discussion in this section concerns data gathered through the public survey conducted in October 2017, but in places comparisons are made with data collected through similar surveys conducted in previous years.

#### 3.1. The 2017 public sample

In total, the views of 741 members of the public were collected through the survey in October 2017. 65% of these respondents lived within Gloucester city or within 5 miles of the city, and 69% of these respondents visited the city centre at least once a week. Figures 5 and 6 illustrate residence proximity to Gloucester and frequency of visits to Gloucester city centre for all participants.

Figure 5: Where the 2017 respondents lived

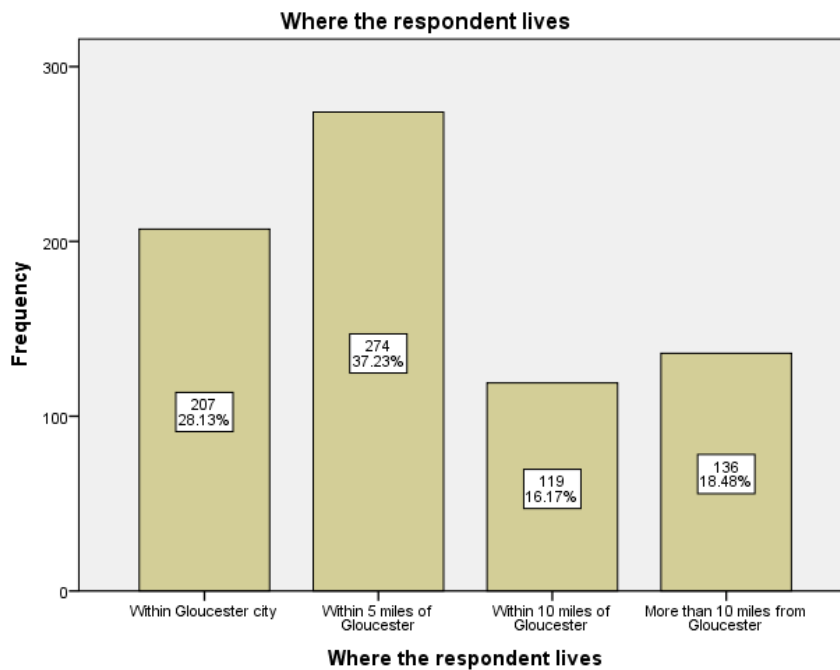
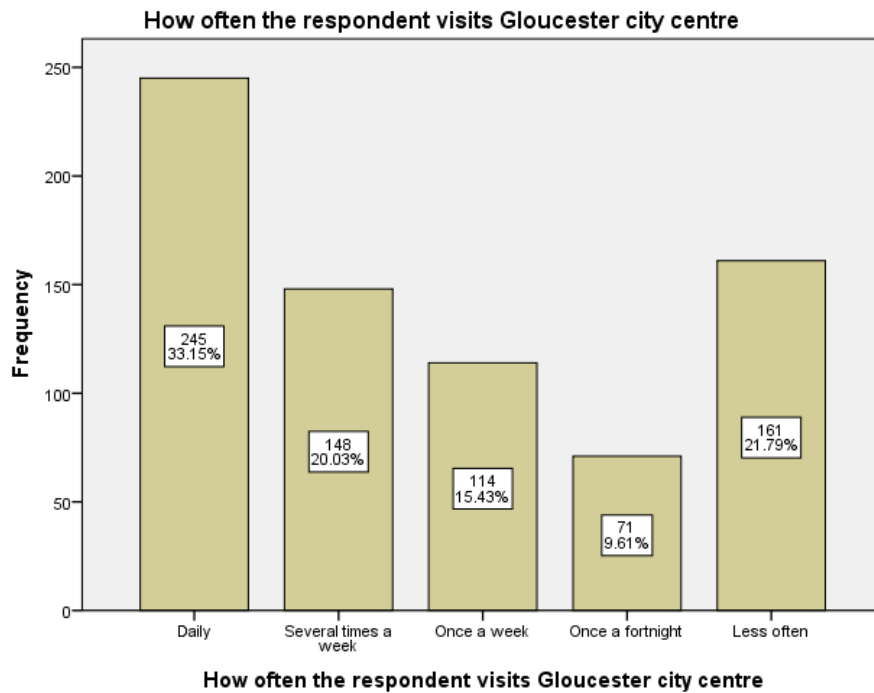


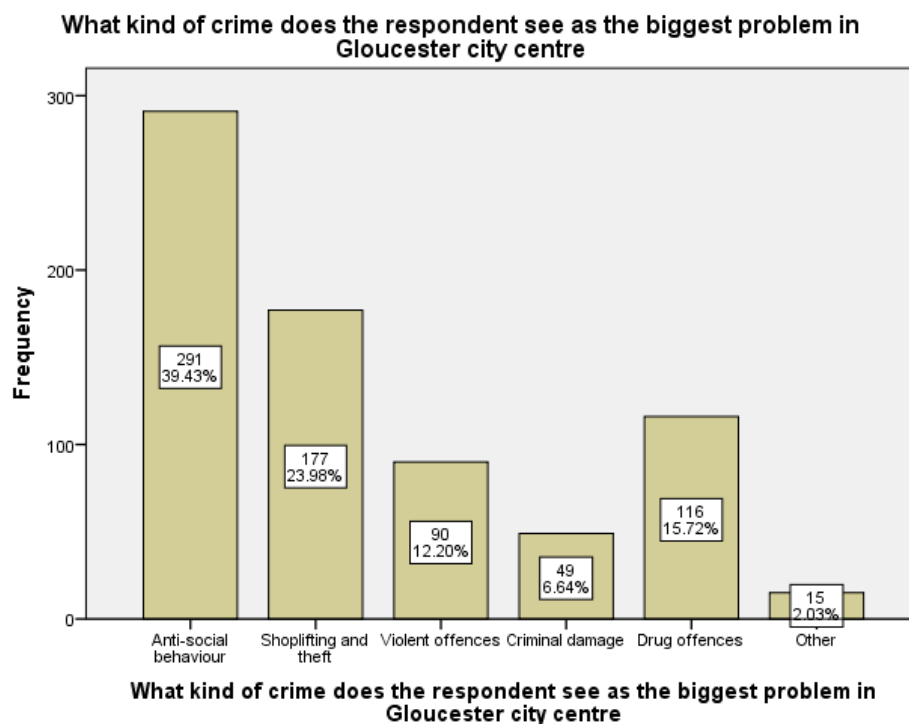
Figure 6: How often the 2017 respondents visited Gloucester city centre



### 3.2. Views on crime problem

Respondents were asked to select the crime that they felt was the biggest problem in Gloucester city centre from the following options: 'Anti-social behaviour', 'shoplifting and theft', 'violent offences', 'criminal damage', 'drug offences', or 'other'. The most common response was 'Anti-social behaviour', which was selected by 291/39% of respondents.

Figure 7: What kind of crime is the biggest problem in Gloucester city centre

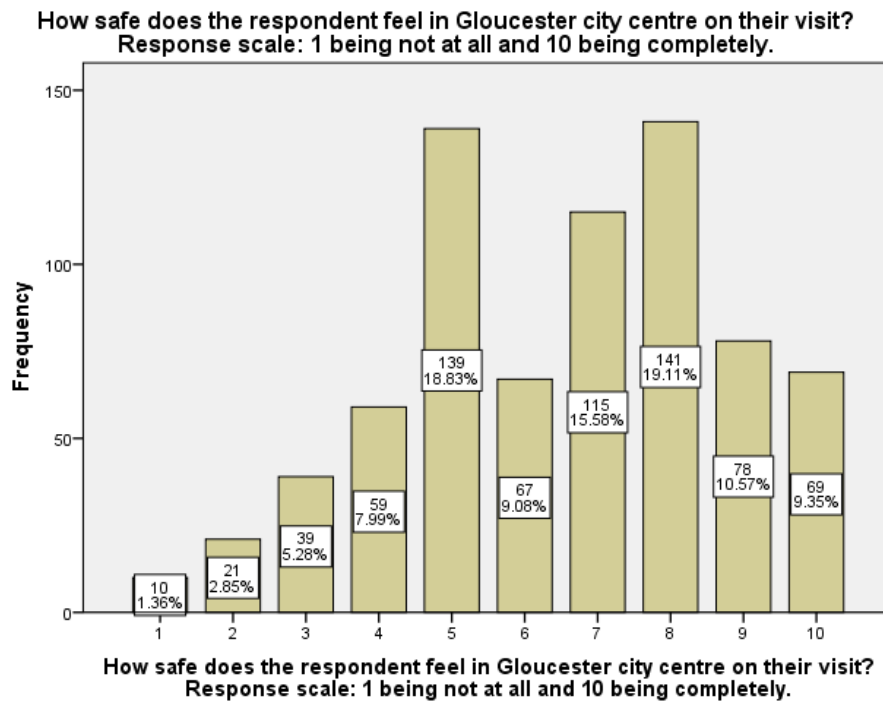




### 3.3. Views on safety

Respondents were asked to state how safe they felt during their visit to Gloucester that day. Respondents did this by selecting a number from a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being 'not at all safe' and 10 being 'completely safe'. 64% of respondents scored their safety in the upper half of this table, revealing a high degree of perceived safety for those in this sample. The most common response was '8', which 141/19% of respondents selected.

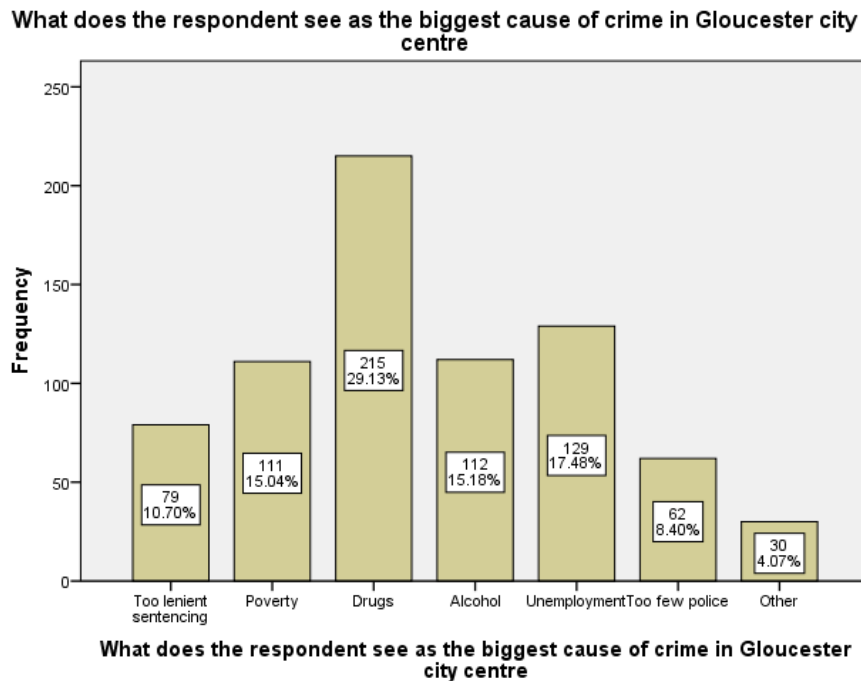
Figure 8: How safe does the respondent feel on their visit to Gloucester



### 3.4. Views on the causes of crime in Gloucester city centre

Respondents were asked to select the factor that they believed to be the biggest cause of crime in Gloucester city centre from the following options: 'Too lenient sentencing', 'poverty', 'drugs', 'alcohol', 'unemployment', 'too few police', or 'other'. 'Drugs' was the most common response, selected by 215/29% of respondents. 'Unemployment' (129/17%), 'Alcohol' (112/15%) and 'poverty' (111/15%) were also common responses.

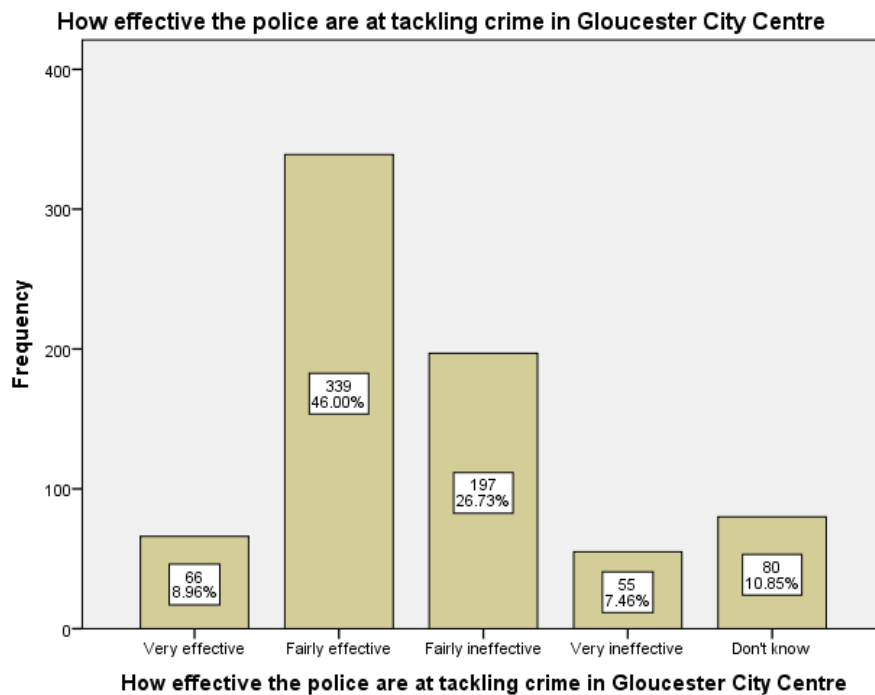
Figure 9: Public views on the causes of crime in Gloucester



### 3.5. Views on police effectiveness in Gloucester city centre

Respondents were asked to provide their view on the effectiveness of police efforts to tackle crime in Gloucester city centre. 405/55% of respondents stated that the police were ‘very effective’ or ‘effective’ in this regard.

Figure 10: Public views on police effectiveness at tackling crime in Gloucester



### 3.6. Perceptions of the scheme

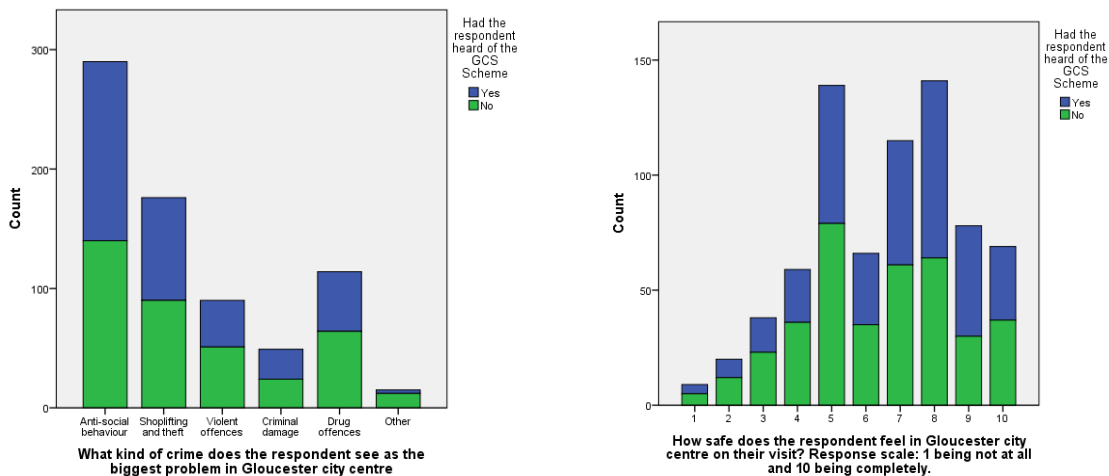
Perceptions concerning the Scheme were gathered from members of the public in Gloucester city centre through the surveys conducted in October 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017. Members of the public were asked about their awareness of the Scheme and, for those that had heard of the Scheme, their views on its effectiveness. 26% (63/247) in 2014, 44% (272/619) in 2015, 37% (208/560) in 2016, and 48% (353/740) in 2017 of members of the public had heard of the Scheme. Of these respondents who had heard of the Scheme, 65% (41/63) in 2014, and 38% (104/272) in 2015 stated that the Scheme ‘works well’, and a similar proportion (98/208, 48%) ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ with the statement ‘the Scheme has been successful in reducing crime in Gloucester’ in the 2016 survey. In the 2017 survey, 75% (256/345) stated that the Scheme was ‘very effective’ or ‘effective’ at tackling crime in Gloucester city centre. Although variation in the measurement scale makes direct comparisons difficult, these findings can still be argued to reflect an increasingly positive view concerning the Scheme’s effectiveness among those who have heard of the Scheme.

These findings are significant for the Scheme. Public awareness of the Scheme is important for maximising its effectiveness. As an important part of the extended Scheme community, information from the public can offer valuable insight in to matters that require attention and in to the behaviour of offenders. The public may be more likely to share this information when they are aware of the Scheme, understand its function and view it as effective. Similarly, awareness of the Scheme and of the implications of receiving a sanction is likely to deter certain individuals from committing crime or particular behaviours. Utilising appropriate channels and opportunities to increase public awareness and promote stories of success is therefore an important part of the Scheme’s activity.

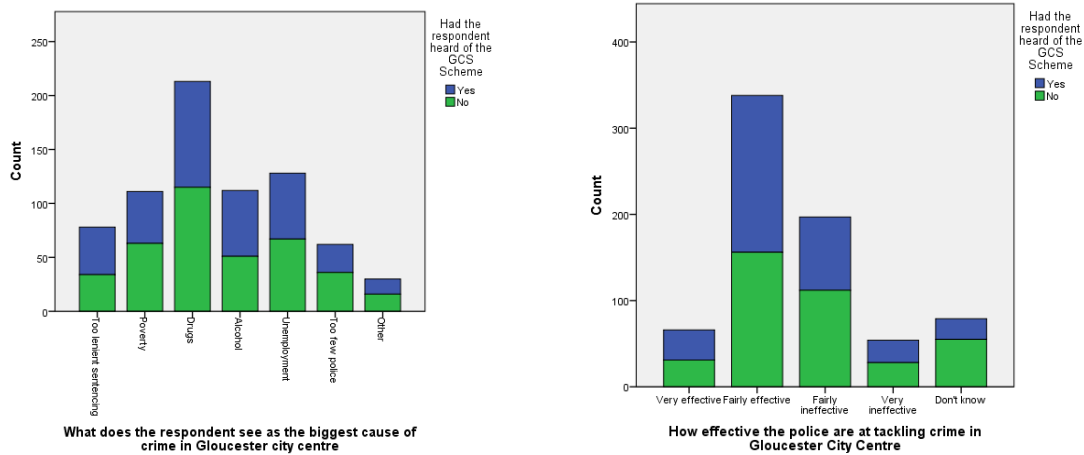
### 3.7. Variation in perceptions of crime, safety and police effectiveness

Analysis of the 2017 public survey data was conducted to examine whether there could be variation in views on crime, safety, and police effectiveness among those who were aware or not aware of the Scheme. The following tables show total responses to the questions on crime problem (Figure 11), safety (Figure 12), cause of crime (figure 13) and police effectiveness (figure 14) with each response option divided by awareness of the Scheme. Where a column is divided in to two unequal halves this might suggest that there is noteworthy variation in views between those who are aware or unaware of the Scheme.

Figures 11 and 12: Views on crime and safety organised by awareness of the Scheme



Figures 13 and 14: Views on causes of crime and police effectiveness organised by awareness of the Scheme



It is evident from these figures that there is not noteworthy variation in views on these topics between those that are aware or unaware of the Scheme. A roughly similar proportion of those that selected each of the response options across the four questions were aware and unaware of the Scheme. Cross-tabulation tables containing the figures that underpin these tables are available upon request.

Analysis was also conducted to consider whether views across these four questions varied according to distance from Gloucester that a respondent lived and how frequently a respondent visited Gloucester. Figures have not been included to illustrate these analyses due to the number of variables here, but cross-tabulation tables that underpin the following observations are available upon request. Views on the biggest crime problem in Gloucester city centre did not appear to vary between those living different distances from Gloucester or between those visiting Gloucester more or less frequently. Although there was not noteworthy variation in feelings of safety among those who lived different distances from Gloucester, more of the respondents that visited the city centre daily reported high feelings of safety during their visit. Although there was not noteworthy variation in views on the biggest cause of crime between those visiting Gloucester more or less frequently, a slightly larger proportion of those who lived outside of the city centre but within 5 miles of Gloucester thought that 'drugs' were the biggest cause of crime.

There was noteworthy variation in views on police effectiveness among those that visited the city centre more or less frequently, and among those who lived different distances from the city centre. By comparing the proportionate responses across all variables, the following observations could be made. A slightly higher proportion of those that live within 5 miles of Gloucester but not in the city centre saw the police as 'fairly effective'. A slightly higher proportion of those that visited the centre daily thought the police were 'fairly effective'. A higher proportion of those that selected 'don't know' in response to the question on police effectiveness lived more than 10 miles from Gloucester or visited Gloucester less often than once a fortnight.

## 4. Benefits and effectiveness of the Scheme

This section of the report examines the benefits and effectiveness of the Scheme according to its members and using data on the sanctions issued through the Scheme. This section draws upon semi-structured interviews (149 in total) with the Scheme's members (i.e. the business involved in the Scheme) conducted in October 2014 (where 31 members were interviewed), October 2015 (where 41 members were interviewed), October 2016 (where 35 members were interviewed) and October 2017 (where 42 members were interviewed). Themes were identified in the interviews that were prevalent across the four years. This section also draws upon data that documents every sanction issued through the Scheme (1223) between 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014 and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017.

### 4.1. Member views on the Scheme's successes

In each of the 149 semi-structured interviews undertaken across the three years of data collection, members were asked questions on the Scheme's effectiveness, its successes and the benefits that it has brought. 141 of the 149 respondents expressed positive sentiments about the Scheme. Many stated that the Scheme had delivered a material reduction in crime, for instance:

*It's had quite a dramatic impact on the business. It's one of the first schemes to actually work (2014)*

*I've been working in Gloucester for 15 years and this is the first Scheme that's had an actual impact... it's reduced anti-social behaviour..... it's given re-offenders a punishment by preventing them from using the buses as well as going into any of the business that are on the Scheme (2015)*

*It is the first Scheme of its kind that has worked (2015)*

*It's the most positive scheme that we have ever had in Gloucester ... and seems to have a positive impact on reducing crime (2016)*

*[the Scheme has] probably stopped so many crimes (2016)*

*it's really, really useful and it's a brilliant tool to have (2017)*

*I've been part of other schemes and they've been a bit shocking, but I think [Gloucester City Safe is] better because you can instantly scroll through and you receive messages on such a regular basis (2017)*

*I think it's made a massive difference (2017)*

### 4.2. Enhanced awareness

126 of the 149 respondents stated that the Scheme had helped them identify individuals who had previously committed sanctionable offences. This was often achieved through communication between members, either via the secure radio network to which members have access, through the website, or through communication from the Scheme manager:

*[The Scheme] is about keeping the rough out and keeping the good in (2014)*

*you're more aware of what's going on around. You know about issues before they happen to you (2015)*

*we've found that here we have less of it [incidents] now especially now we know the faces of people (2016)*

*I think it's good because you get the instant messaging... [and] once you get a notification through you're obviously more inclined to keep an eye for that specific person (2017)*

*we know who we need to look out for and what is going on around us, in other stores nearby (2017)*

*it's easy to see who you need to be looking for. It's easy to see what they've done. It's good to get pictures of faces. Because without it I wouldn't know who to look for and they'd slip under the radar (2017)*

### **4.3. Deterring offenders and preventing offences**

53 of the 149 responses noted that, above and beyond the overall positive benefits of the scheme, there was a marked element of offender deterrence achieved through Scheme membership. When offences did occur, the warning/exclusion sanction system was felt by members to be a significant mechanism through which they could influence behaviour and control entry to their premises, further adding to the element of deterrence:

*A lot of people who are on yellow cards when they see the city safe logo um they mention straight away if they are on city safe and that they don't want to cause a problem (2015)*

*It does change people's behaviour, certainly people who have yellow cards behave very differently and don't want to be in a situation where they get red cards. (2015)*

*The yellow and red cards, people have altered their behaviour ... the ones on yellow cards have proved the cards work as a deterrent, as they do not want a red card. Red cards make their life difficult and inconvenient. (2016)*

*I think it stops [offenders] and the fact that they are banned from everywhere including the buses um when they're on a red card, it's a huge deterrent (2017)*

This perceived success is in line with the quantitative data on the sanctions issued through the Scheme. A total of 1223 sanctions were issued to 954 individuals between June 2014 and May 2017. 796 individuals (83% of those who received sanctions) received only one sanction, illustrating a high degree of compliance with this mechanism. However, 158 individuals received a second sanction through the Scheme and were therefore excluded from member premises. 59 (37%) of those who received a second sanction did not offend further after its receipt. Although far lower than the level of overall desistance following a first sanction, this still illustrates the degree of success experienced by the Scheme's efforts to achieve desistance among those who choose to ignore their initial sanction.

Offence prevention is further evidenced through the issuing of sanctions for 'being on the premises while banned'. This was the incident classification recorded by the Scheme when an excluded individual set foot in a member premises. Scheme data recorded 869 incidents of 'being on the premises while banned'. This can indicate a number of different events and can be considered as a

type of success for the Scheme in certain circumstances. Firstly, any occurrence of being on the premises while banned that occurs at a location other than where an exclusion was issued shows effective information sharing among members. Secondly, if an incident of being on the premises while banned occurs in isolation, as it did in 395 (45%) of instances, then it is arguable that an incident was avoided as an excluded individual was asked to leave a location before they had the opportunity to commit an offence. Where an instance of being on the premises while banned occurred alongside another type of offence, as it did in 474/55% of instances, the Scheme may not have experienced a direct crime reduction success.

#### **4.4. Community cohesion and increased feelings of safety and security**

79 of the 149 respondents said that Scheme membership brought with it a strong sense of community cohesion:

*Everybody works together (2014)*

*We are part of a community (2014)*

*I think it's really good. We're all sort of sticking together and ... coming together (2015)*

*I like how it's a cross network. Your part of the team (2015)*

*we feel like we're a part of a very special group in the sense that, you know, we're a part of all the local traders (2015)*

*It ... shows people that we work together and that it's not an individual going out on a limb saying "you're barred" (2016)*

*we know that the whole of the high street is dealing with this and the whole of the high street is sort of standing together (2017)*

*[the Scheme] makes it more of a community amongst the shops that are part of it (2017)*

*Everybody backs this one hundred percent (2017)*

Members noted that with this community cohesion came feelings of safety and security. Members described the importance of the connection to other scheme members, to the scheme management and how they felt less isolated as a result of these connections:

*I work alone in the building. The Scheme makes me feel easier (2014)*

*everywhere keeps in contact with each other. Like if you're a daytime trader or a night time trader everyone's constantly keeping in contact, uh, so everyone knows what's going on at the same time (2015)*

*What's good about this is it involves the police a lot more. Its multiple agencies (2016)*

*we use it in order to help us keep our people safe (2017)*

*Our staff safety is a key thing with the crime that goes on. That is mainly what we use it for (2017)*

*I think it makes it feel like you're not alone (2017)*

*when you're alone working, it feels safer (2017)*

Members discussed the importance of communication in generating a sense of community and feelings of enhanced safety. For example, members highlighted access to the two-way radios as an effective way to contact the Scheme's management team, who in turn have access to the town centre CCTV operators, the various security teams, and the police:

*It keeps everyone in the loop (2014)*

*It makes us feel more secure as a business, knowing that we've got that point of contact with security around the town. And also so we can hear what's going on with the rest of the town, so we like it as just a piece of security really, just to make us feel a bit safer in store (2015)*

*I think it's really good. It just helps communications between all the different pubs and businesses. It helps to make sure we can communicate if there is any trouble (2015)*

*[I] would say it's given us a better communication avenue. It's not just "come help, come help, come help, come help", but actually "we support you, you support us", and the community has that relationship which I think is very good (2016)*

*It's an absolutely brilliant Scheme because we can all share information ... it makes it more difficult for them [offenders] to be able to go to other stores and help themselves cause we're all aware of who's out active, whose been locked up (2016)*

*the radio network is invaluable without a doubt, because ... it means we can contact [the Scheme] immediately when there's a problem (2017)*

*there is someone at the end of the radio if we need help ... like for safety and security (2017)*

*we can all contact each other with walkie-talkies really quickly if there's any trouble um or we need to get a hold of anybody, and I just think it's a great thing to be a part of really (2017)*



## 5. Repeat offenders

This section of the report considers the activity of the repeat offenders that is captured by the Scheme. It provides further insight in to business victimisation and the behaviours of those who target businesses when offending.

### 5.1. The offending behaviour of repeat offenders

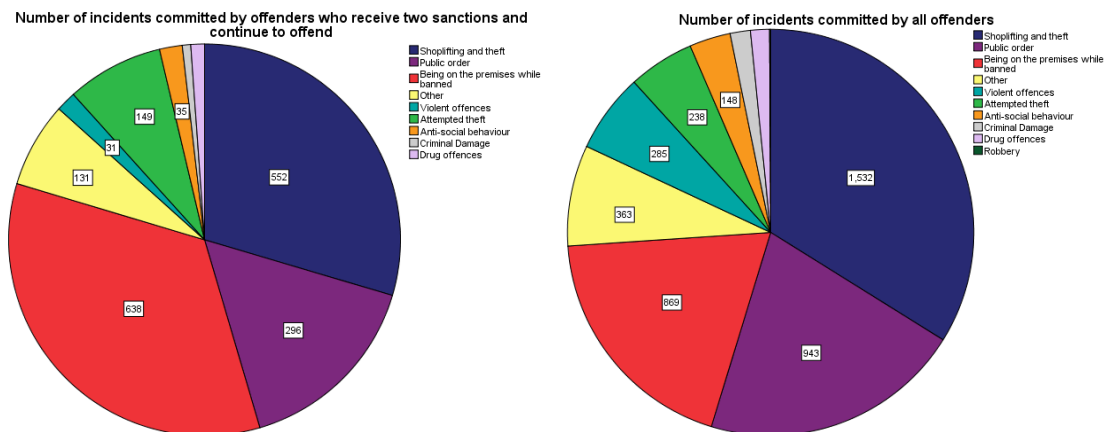
As noted previously, there were 4523 incidents committed by 1433 offenders at 88 locations. Although the mean number of incidents committed by an offender is 3.2 (with the mode and median values both at 1, and the standard deviation at 7.4), the distribution of these incidents across the offender group is uneven. The highest number of incidents committed by a single person was 118. 34 individuals (2% of total offenders) had committed 20 or more offences, constituting 1411 (31%) of the total incidents reported. 237 individuals (16% of total offenders) committed 4 or more offences and were responsible for 2852 (63%) of the total incidents. 826 offenders (58%) had committed one offence and 607 offenders (42%) had committed more than one offence.

*Figure 15: Number of incidents committed by offenders*

Number of incidents committed by individual offender	Number/percentage of individual offenders who have committed this number of offences	Total number/percentage of incidents committed by these offenders	Cumulative number/percentage of offenders and incidents
50+	9/0.6%	661/14.6%	9/0.6% and 661/14.6%
20-49	25/1.7%	750/16.6%	34/2.3% and 1411/31.2%
10-19	36/2.5%	515/11.4%	70/4.8% and 1926/42.6%
5-9	108/7.5%	690/15.5%	178/12.3% and 2616/58.1%
4	59/4.1%	236/5.2%	237/16.4% and 2852/63.3%
3	105/7.3%	315/7.0%	342/23.7% and 3167/70.3%
2	265/18.5%	530/11.7%	607/42.2% and 3697/82%
1	826/57.6%	826/18.3%	1433 and 4523 (100%)

For a small number of offenders, the Scheme appeared to have little impact as a deterrent. Of the 158 individuals that received a second sanction through the Scheme, and were therefore excluded from member premises, 99 (63%) offended further after its receipt. Comparisons between the incidents committed by those who continue to offend after their second sanction (Figure 6) and the total offending population (Figure 7) reveal some noteworthy differences.

Figures 16 and 17: All incidents (n=1866) committed by individuals who received two sanctions and continue to offend (n=99) & All incidents (n=4523) committed by all offenders (n=1433)



Rates of attempted theft are proportionately higher among twice-sanctioned offenders (149/8% of total) than among the total offender population (238/5% of total). Rates of shoplifting and theft are proportionately similar among both offender groups (c.30%). However, public order offences and violent offences are proportionately lower within the incidents committed by twice-sanctioned offenders (17% combined as opposed to 27% combined among all offenders). A significant difference between these two figures can be observed in the proportional rate of being on the premises while banned (34% of offences committed by twice-sanctioned offenders compared to 19% of offences committed by all offenders). The high volume of this incident among these offenders illustrates the considerable effort made by members to enforce the Scheme’s sanctions and report incidents where exclusions are ignored. Again, this demonstrates the cohesion that is fostered by the Scheme, and the commitment of this Scheme’s members to increase their own safety and the safety of others. Although repeat offenders are still responsible for proportionately more of the criminal activities that are captured by the Scheme, and are to varying degrees ignoring the exclusion sanction, as noted previously, each incident of being on a premises while banned reported in isolation can be argued to be a crime prevented.

### 5.2. Member perceptions on repeat offenders

The patterns in the sanction data were also observed by the Scheme’s members. Despite an overall perspective of the Scheme as effective, there was a clear indication that that the benefits were limited when it came to some repeat offenders:

*I think you get less crime from unknown sources. Everything that does occur on days especially is from people that you already know about (2015)*

*You get the ones that are so stubborn that are known to us; they won’t take notice. Then you’re talking hardened criminals, guys who have spent time, then as soon as their out they will always come back (2015)*

*The habitual people, you know, they just don’t care (2016)*

*I don’t think it will stop somebody from stealing if they want to steal, or beating somebody up if they want to do it. (2016)*

*it's just the hard-nailed ones that just don't bother and you know just ignore it and carry on (2017)*

## 6. Conclusion

This report has presented a multi-year examination of the Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) 'Gloucester City Safe'. The report's findings can be used by the Scheme's management and the police to enhance understanding of crime and disorder in Gloucester and its surrounding areas and to help inform efforts to tackle these issues.

### Crime and disorder experienced by the Scheme's members

This report offers unique insight in to patterns of crime and disorder. The incidents captured by the Scheme are unevenly concentrated across time and location, and a proportionately small number of offenders are responsible for a relatively large proportion of these offences. The offending behaviours of these individuals, similarly, are not consistent across time and location. It is important that this insight is considered when resources are deployed and that members are made aware of these findings.

### Public opinion and awareness of the Scheme

This report has generated insight in to public views on crime, safety and police effectiveness in Gloucester city centre. The public's concern with anti-social behaviour and drugs in Gloucester is particularly noteworthy here, as are the feelings of safety reported by the majority of the sample. This insight can be used by the Scheme and the police to help inform public engagement and to demonstrate to the public that efforts are being made to combat the things that the public views as important or problematic.

Roughly half (48%) of respondents in 2017 were aware of the Scheme (the highest rate across the four years of data collection), and 75% of these respondents viewed the Scheme as effective at tackling crime in Gloucester city centre (also the highest rate across the four years of data collection). However, it is important that the Scheme continues its efforts to raise awareness of the Scheme and to share and promote success stories to ensure that members of the public help support its efforts, that membership continues to expand, and that individuals are deterred from offending. Indeed, when asked whether there was anything that they would like to change or improve about the Scheme, it was these matters that were raised by some of the members.

### The benefits and effectiveness of the Scheme

The Scheme has achieved a range of successes. Not only are members committed to the Scheme (in terms of reporting relevant incidents and sharing information), but their use and support of its sanctions are central to the impact that a non-police led/legally enforceable punishment can have within a community. Members' accounts indicate high levels of perceived effectiveness that is partially confirmed by the incident and sanction data. The large majority (83%) of offenders desisted from further offending following a first sanction. It is arguable that in these cases the threat of an exclusion from over 100 food and goods retailers and entertainment and transport providers carried sufficient weight to deter these individuals from committing further incidents. There is also measurable success in terms of those individuals who do not commit further offences after receipt of a second sanction (an exclusion), and the occurrence of an instance of being on the premises while banned also brings with it various connotations of success.

The shared application of situation crime prevention methods has played an important part in strengthening community cohesion and increasing feelings of safety and security among members of

the Scheme. The heightened awareness of offenders and their behaviour that members identified as a benefit of the Scheme illustrates how members have been successfully mobilised to support efforts to prevent the crimes that affect others. This success is both a product of the Scheme and a platform for further success. With increases in feelings of safety, security, and community cohesion comes an increased willingness to participate actively in community crime prevention. This in turn will generate more information about offenders and offences and raise awareness among the broader public (both factors in the prevention of further crime).

### **Tackling the issue of repeat offenders**

A small number of repeat offenders were found to be causing major problems for some of the Scheme's members, and the Scheme's sanctions are having little effect on the behaviour of these individuals. Indeed, a number of members noted that tougher sanctions and greater police enforcement of sanctions may well help tackle this issue. The recent introduction of City Protection Officers and the increasing use of Criminal Behavioural Orders may already be helping combat repeat offenders.

### **Overall findings, limitations of the study and areas for future enquiry**

There is no doubt that the Scheme has experienced a number of crime reduction successes and offers many benefits for its members. The Scheme's manager, Richard Burge, has worked hard with others to raise the Scheme's public profile and increase its membership numbers, both of which have been significant to the successes of the Scheme. However, maintaining a position where the threat of exclusion carries such weight requires considerable community buy-in and sustained effort. Similarly, deterrence of first time offenders and support from the broader public requires coordinated promotion of the Scheme by members. It is vital, therefore, that sufficient funds and resources continue to be dedicated to these activities.

There are a number of limitations to this research which should be acknowledged. Firstly, the incident data only captures what is reported to the Scheme. Despite a high degree of commitment from members to reporting all incidents, these data will not provide a complete picture of crime and disorder against businesses in the locations in which the Scheme is present. Secondly, although interviews were conducted with a number of members each year, these interviews were not conducted with the same employee each year, which could bring with it some inconsistencies. Thirdly, despite this research offering valuable insight in to the victimisation and crime reduction activity that occurs within a business community, further research is needed to understand how opportunity, security and other factors play a part in crimes against businesses. The authors hope to consider issues concerning desistance (including the impact of City Protection Officers and Criminal Behaviour Orders) and displacement (both between member premises and from member locations to elsewhere) through further studies.

## 7. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Questionnaire used in 2017

#### 1. How often do you visit Gloucester city centre?

- Daily
- Several times a week
- Once a week
- Once a fortnight
- less often

#### 2. Where do you live?

- Within Gloucester city
- Within 5 miles of Gloucester
- Within 10 miles of Gloucester
- More than 10 miles from Gloucester

#### 3. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being not at all and 10 being completely, how safe do you feel in Gloucester city centre on your visit today?

#### 4. From the following options, what kind of crime do you think is the biggest problem in Gloucester city centre?

- Anti-social behaviour
- Shoplifting and theft
- Violent offences
- Criminal damage
- Drug offences
- Other [Please specify]

#### 5. From the following options, what would you say the biggest cause of crime in Gloucester city centre is?

- Too lenient sentencing
- Poverty
- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Unemployment
- Too few police
- Other [Please specify]

#### 6. How effective are the police at tackling crime in Gloucester city centre?

- Very effective
- Fairly effective
- Fairly ineffective
- Very ineffective
- Don't know

**7. Have you heard of the Gloucester City Safe scheme?**

Yes

No

**8. How effective is the Gloucester City Safe scheme at tackling crime in Gloucester city centre?**

Very effective

Fairly effective

Fairly ineffective

Very ineffective

Don't know

**9. Is there anything else that you would like to say about crime or safety in Gloucester city centre?**

## Appendix 2: Interview script used in 2017

1. How long has your business been a member of the Gloucester City Safe Scheme?
2. How do you use the information that you have access to through the Scheme?
3. How many incidents have you and your colleagues here reported to the Scheme since you joined it?
4. Have you personally ever reported an incident to the Scheme?
  - *IF YES, please could you tell me about what happened?*
  - *How did you find the reporting process?*
  - *Do you know if the individual(s) concerned received a sanction through the scheme?*
  - *If NO, why not?*
5. What would you say are the benefits or the things that work best about the Scheme?
6. Is there anything you would change or improve about the Scheme?
7. Do you think the Scheme has been successful in tackling crime in [Gloucester **OR** Stroud, depending on member's location]?
  - *Why?*
8. Can you think of anything that is preventing the Scheme from reducing crime in [Gloucester **OR** Stroud, depending on member's location]?
9. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the Scheme?
10. We're hoping to assess the on-going effectiveness of the Scheme by speaking to its members again at some point in the future.
  - Would you be happy with us coming to you again?



### Appendix 3: Incident classification table

#### GCS data classification conversion

Classification used in this report	Police recorded crime data classification	GCS data classification
Anti-social behaviour	Anti-social behaviour	Begging Begging persistent Kerbcrawling Noise Nuisance Rough Sleeping Street drinking
Attempted theft		Attempted theft
Being on the premises while banned		Being on the premises while banned
Criminal Damage	Criminal damage and arson	Criminal Damage/Graffiti/Vandalism
Drug offences	Drugs	Possession of Drugs Possession with intent to supply drugs
Other	Other crime Vehicle crime Burglary Possession of weapons	Breach of police bail Breach of Section 35 (was 27) Order Going equipped to steal Hate Crime Illegal gambling Inappropriate sexual contact Infringement/Breach of ASBO/CPW/CPN/CBO Joyriding Misuse of ID Other Possession of an offensive weapon Racial Abuse Section 35 issued Smoking, underage or in prohibited area Underage Intoxication Unlicensed Street Trading Unlicensed Taxi Cab
Public order	Public order	Drunken and disorderly behaviour Harassment/Threatening Behaviour Verbal Abuse
Robbery	Robbery	Robbery
Shoplifting and theft	Bicycle theft Other theft Shoplifting Theft from person	Theft
Violent offences	Violence and sexual offences	Assault violence affray