COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING WITHIN THE TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

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INTRODUCTION

As a small indigenous minority group in Ireland, Travellers have experienced a long history of social disadvantage, discrimination and inequality. Limited accessibility to health care, educational opportunities and adequate accommodation illustrates Travellers' continued marginalized status within Irish society today (Helleiner, 2000; Fanning, 2002). While there remains limited research on the difficulties faced by Travellers, what is available suggests that Travellers continue to be viewed with hostility and animosity by the majority settled population and this has impacted on relations between police and Travellers (Mulcahy & O'Mahony, 2005).

Over the past two decades in particular, processes of globalization have made Ireland a much more culturally diverse nation. The introduction of legislation such as the *Equal Status Act 2000* demonstrates that policy makers have begun to make fundamental changes in order to meet the shifting needs of a modern multicultural society.

As with changes through legislation, An Garda Siochana, as the national police force in Ireland, has recognized the important role it plays in improving relations with minority, ethnic communities. Some examples of this are found in the creation of the *Garda Racial and Intercultural Office* and the introduction of *ethnic liaison officers*. Of particular significance is the recent introduction of the *Garda Siochana Bill 2004*. The bill provides for the implementation of a police/community consultative process which will offer police a framework on which to enter into partnership development with communities. It also introduces new opportunities for communities to express their views on the policing services they receive.

Therefore it is vital that all groups (including ethnic minority groups such as the Traveller community) have an equal voice in this process.

In an effort to assist the further development of ongoing dialogue between the Traveller community and An Garda Siochana, this research seeks to identify factors that currently influence relations between Travellers and police, and as a result directly impact on the way in which policing services are currently provided to the Traveller community. It also aims to highlight possible means through which relations between Travellers and the police could be improved.

This research study is structured as follows. Chapter one provides a history of the Traveller community, illustrating how the position of Travellers in Ireland has evolved over the past four decades. Chapter two examines policing in Ireland from a community perspective, with particular consideration given to the recent introduction of community-oriented policing initiatives. Chapter three outlines my research methodology and chapter four presents a summary and analysis of my findings. Chapter five completes the study by presenting final recommendations for future development in terms of relations between the police and the Traveller community.

Given the relative lack of social and academic studies focusing on the difficulties faced by Travellers and the recent introduction through legislation of a police/community consultative process, I hope that discussion generated from this thesis will encourage others to continue working towards the establishment of effective community-oriented policing strategies within the Traveller community.

CHAPTER ONE
A Historical View of the Traveller Community

This chapter begins by briefly defining key terms relevant to the topics discussed in this thesis. It then provides a historical view of the Traveller community within Irish society. By illustrating how the unique position of Travellers in Ireland has evolved over the past four decades, this chapter creates a contextual framework on which to explore existing relations between the Traveller community and An Garda Siochana.

Defining Terms

The **Traveller Community** as defined within this paper refers to "the community of people who are commonly called Travellers and who are identified (both by themselves and others) as people with a shared history, culture and tradition including, historically, a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland" (Equal Status Act, 2000, p.7). The concept of **nomadism** is an important cultural aspect of Traveller identity and is defined as an established cultural framework or distinct "way of looking at the world" rather than simply the tradition of moving from one location to another (Pavee Point, 2005b, p.1). Therefore "even where Travellers occupy houses they regard accommodation as essentially temporary in nature – as do other nomadic peoples around the world" (Pavee Point, 2005b, p.1). In contrast the **Settled Community** is described as the predominately white, sedentary majority Irish population who do not have a tradition of following a nomadic lifestyle. This does not include those individuals who have recently arrived in Ireland through immigration.

The status of Travellers generates considerable debate and claims that Travellers are an ethnic group that has experienced racism in Ireland remains "contested in both official and popular discourse" (Helleiner, 2000, p.8). For the purpose of this work I have chosen to follow a ruling from the British Courts in which Lord Fraser in "Mandla v. Dowell Lee" (1983) offers a definition of **ethnicity** that confirms Travellers as a distinct ethnic group within Irish society (Appendix 1). I have also chosen to view the issue of **racism** from a culturalist perspective which focuses on how racial discrimination is mobilized not on the basis of biological difference, but in terms of "cultural identity or national boundaries" (Helleiner, 2000, p.8).

The Irish Traveller Community

Travellers are a small minority ethnic group that has been a part of Irish society for centuries. They have their own traditions including a nomadic lifestyle, language, culture and heritage. "Unlike many 'Gypsy', Roma and other Travellers in Europe who are attributed with collective origins outside of their respective 'host' nations"; Travellers are seen as an indigenous group within Ireland (Helleiner, 2000, p.29). However, even though "Travellers have not been constructed as racially 'Other'" their "attributed origins have none the less often been deeply stigmatizing and have been used to legitimate anti-Traveller action" (p.29).

Over time many *origin* stories have been created to explain the presence of Travellers in Ireland. Most accounts have accepted the notion that Travellers are indigenous to Ireland and therefore any debate has focused on *when* and *why* Travellers have become a unique section of Irish society. One popular explanation centers on colonial times, and contends that Travellers are the descendents of Irish peasants forced from their lands due to famines and centuries of British control (Helleiner, 2000). However as Helleiner (2000, p.51) points out "despite some attempts

to locate Travellers and anti-Traveller racism with the context of changing class relations of the late nineteenth century and the emergence of bourgeois nationalism in the early twentieth century, little original historical research has actually been conducted" - leaving a considerable gap in our understanding of Traveller history.

Nevertheless the perspective that Travellers have been denied a legitimate place in Irish society has been reinforced in recent times by the nature of state-imposed social policies intended to control the actions and movement of Travellers over the past four decades. Ireland's shift from a predominately rural to an urban society began in the 1950s and continued through the 1960s, marking the end of social relations based on a rural economy (Fanning, 2002). It was during this time that "Travellers became objects of social policy and of social control by the state" (p.152). This is not to say that tension between Travellers and the settled community did not exist prior to a shift to social urbanization. From the creation of the Free State of Ireland in 1922 to the 1960s the media and local authorities regularly reported the anti-Traveller views shared by the majority settled population (Helleiner, 2000). However it was not until 1963 that the state, bowing to pressures from the settled community, released the first of three reports that attempted to address Traveller issues in Ireland. The *Report of the Commission on Itinerancy 1963*, the *Report of the Travelling People Review Body 1983*, and the *Report of the Task Force on the Travelling People 1995* illustrate bureaucratic perspectives and responses to Travellers over several decades (Fanning, 2002; Helleiner, 2000).

Changing Views in Ireland (1963-2004)

The *Report of the Commission on Itinerancy 1963* viewed Traveller's traditional way of life as generating problems for mainstream society and focused attention on rehabilitation and

assimilation as a means of dealing with itinerancy. The notion that the Traveller community was an ethnic group or that it experienced discrimination and racism was not considered within the report. Travellers were seen as experiencing poverty and disadvantage due to their *"cultural inferiority"* and it was suggested that the only way to resolve existing problems was to assimilate them into mainstream Irish society (Fanning, 2002; Pavee Point, 2005).

Two decades later in the *Report of the Travelling People Review Body 1983* the distinct identity of the Traveller community was acknowledged and the term *itinerant* was replaced with *traveller*. While the report did recognize the existence of hostility and indifference directed towards Travellers, the issue of discrimination was not addressed. Instead the report focused on the "barriers of mistrust between the settled and travelling communities" (Review Body, 1983, p.3). The nomadic way of life, as a part of Traveller cultural identity, was not supported and the assimilation of Travellers into conventional Irish society continued to be the focus (Fanning, 2002; Pavee Point, 2005).

Unlike the previous two reports the *Report of the Task Force on the Travelling People 1995* included participation from Traveller organizations. This provided an insight not found in the previous reports and shifted thinking "from a welfare approach inspired by charity to a more rights based approach inspired by a partnership process" (Task Force, 1995, p.62). Recognition was also provided for the "concepts of culture, ethnicity, racism and discrimination" and "resulted in a redefinition of the Traveller situation in terms of cultural rights as opposed to simply being a poverty issue" (Task Force, 1995, p.62).

Travellers' unique cultural identity was "taken into account" throughout the report (Task Force, 1995, p.12). It was accepted that "Traveller culture lies in the values, meanings and identity that the Traveller community shares" (Task Force, 1995, p.71). Recommendations in

relation to education, health care and accommodation issues were also clearly outlined within the document.

However not all members of the Task Force were in agreement with the recognition and acceptance of Traveller nomadism as part of their cultural identity. In an addendum added at the conclusion of the report, four Task Force members (three local government councilors and one local authority official) outlined their reasons for rejecting the Travellers traditional nomadic way of life:

> Such a lifestyle will always place those who participate in it at a disadvantage in terms of accessibility to health and educational services, job opportunities and general services like insurances, loans, mortgages etc. and these facts must be acknowledged by those who espouse it for themselves and for their children. A permanent base for young families would give the children opportunities in life very similar to those enjoyed by most settled children. (Task Force, 1995, p.289)

Having outlined concerns for the wellbeing of Traveller children, the addendum goes on to suggest that "the vast majority of the settled community are appalled at the prospect of a traveller halting site next to them", and that residents are justified in their "panic and fear" when considering "the investment made by individuals in their homes and the sacrifices that have to be made to support the investment and to give their families a better start at life" (Task Force, 1995, p.290). It was also suggested that Travellers and Traveller organizations did not recognize "that today's society finds it difficult to accept a lower standard of conduct from a section of the community who consciously pursue a way of life which sets its members apart from ordinary citizens" (Task Force, 1995, p.290). These statements illustrate a continued construction of Travellers as *inferiorized others* and, similar to the previous reports, demonstrate the level of opposition to any "Traveller-related initiatives beyond settlement" (Helleiner, 2000, p.241).

Nevertheless while consensus among members of the Task Force was not achievable in all areas of the report, it is important to recognize the value of the participatory process which for the first time gave Travellers a say in the development of social policies related to their community. Unfortunately, it has been argued that this did not significantly influence the development of new policy directives and legislative initiatives (Fanning, 2002; Helleiner, 2000). Consequently many of the recommendations outlined within the report have yet to be implemented and, as Fanning (2002, p.5) suggests, "Irish social policy continues to be characterized by monoculturalism, assimilationism and institutional racism".

In 1989, the *Prohibition of Incitement to Racial, Religious or National Hatred Bill,* was introduced as "a part of a larger process of legal reform aimed at Irish ratification of international human rights legislation" (Helleiner, 2000, p. 229). Its creation also led to extensive deliberation over the issue of Traveller ethnicity and anti-Traveller racism. During 1988-89 parliamentary debates it was generally accepted that Travellers experienced prejudice and were "subjected to all kinds of discrimination and outrage by a number of people and institutions in Ireland such as local communities, business houses, shops, post offices, and even county council authorities" (Fennell, 1988, p.984). This acknowledgment indicated that Travellers required some form of protection under the new bill. However the question of how to define Travellers within the legislation raised a great deal of concern. In the end the issue of Traveller ethnicity was sidestepped and Travellers were provided protection on the basis of their "membership in the travelling community". Even though Travellers did not receive acknowledgement as an ethnic group, naming them under the legislation was an important development and has led to Travellers being similarly identified within subsequent legislation such as the *Equal Status Act 2000.*

As with previous government documents, a key interest of many politicians engaged in the *incitement of hatred* debates was the integration of Travellers into mainstream Irish society. While the legislation was seen as a means of ensuring that Irish Travellers would "be protected and not abused" (Barnes, 1988, p.602); it appears that a great deal of concern was raised in relation to Traveller accommodation, with the underlying goal that Travellers would "be housed and integrated with the community" (Barnes, 1988, p.602). By directing political attention away from the protection of Travellers and onto the issue of settlement, it is not surprising that the success of this legislation to address anti-Traveller racism has been brought into question (Helleiner, 2000).

Furthermore, as Fanning (2002, p.152) stresses, the continual resistance by the state to formally accept Travellers' ethnicity and its unrelenting focus on the "ideological goals of assimilation notwithstanding the emergence of new discourses of inclusion and integration" have led to the "racialisation of Travellers as a deviant sub-group within a homogenously imagined nation". Evidence of this can be observed through specific legislation such as the *Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2002* and the *Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998* developed to deal with aspects of the Traveller accommodation issue.

Travellers in Ireland Today

Irish society has changed dramatically over the past two decades. Globalization and Europeanization have encouraged major economic growth and development within Ireland, which in turn has led to increased immigration and most recently the arrival of individuals seeking asylum. The view that Ireland is a monocultural nation is disappearing with the arrival of large numbers of individuals possessing different racial, cultural and religious backgrounds. This

has had a dramatic impact on Irish society in general, but what influences, if any, have these changes had on the Traveller community?

Ireland's participation in the European Union afforded the Traveller community with legislative recognition and greater human rights protection. Also, the introduction of other marginalized communities into Irish society has led to joint efforts between various minority groups (including the Traveller community) to address issues such as racism and discrimination. From a negative perspective the benefits of monetary growth enjoyed by much of the population has created a greater economic division between those from mainstream Irish society and those living in marginalized or disenfranchised communities. And while the introduction of these processes have greatly increased the profile of issues such as ethnicity, the impact for the Traveller community has been marginal as Travellers continue to have the lowest life chances in Irish society when quality of life issues are examined.

Quality of Life Issues

As mentioned earlier, the 1995 Task Force Report provided insight and direction into important quality of life issues, including health care, accommodation and education for Irish Travellers. However there has been a lack of movement on the part of central and local governments to fulfill the recommendations set out in the report, which included the development nationally of 3,100 accommodation units for the Traveller community by the year 2000. Frustrated by the inability of local authorities to achieve this goal, a letter was presented to the Irish Prime Minister (An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern) on November 18, 2004 by three national Traveller organizations, Pavee Point, the Irish Traveller Movement and the National Traveller

Women's Forum. The letter outlined the lack of movement on the part of policy makers to address the issue of Traveller accommodation stating that:

> We are saddened to see …Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government figures which demonstrate that there are 788 families still living by the side of the road, there are an additional 323 families sharing basic facilities with other family members, with a further 352 families in emergency and temporary facilities, this brings a total of 1,463 (22% of Traveller families), still living without permanent quality accommodation 5 years after the adoption of Local Authority Traveller Accommodation Programmes (Pavee Point, 2005a, p.27).

Pavee Point has further suggested that one reason local governments remain resistant in providing appropriate Traveller accommodation is because "many local authorities persist in the assimilationist approaches", focusing on persuading "Travellers to move into houses rather than specific accommodation, such as halting sites or group housing" (p.12).

The introduction of the *Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2002* which was implemented without Traveller consultation is a further indication that the current policy makers are not sympathetic to addressing the accommodation issue in a manner that reflects the cultural interests of the Traveller community. The act enables police to remove caravans, and for the owners to be charged with trespassing, for which if found guilty an owner could be fined up to 3,800 euros and/or jailed for one month. This is particularly harsh treatment when one considers that many Travellers are being forced to live at the side of the road because they do not have access to "halting sites or other forms of Traveller specific accommodation" and must wait for extended periods of time for appropriate accommodation opportunities to become available (p. 25).

Local authorities are at the centre of the controversy surrounding Traveller accommodation. Their role in the planning and management of Traveller specific accommodation as well as their responsibility as enforcers of the *Housing (Miscellaneous*

Provisions) Act 2002 places them in a position to directly affect the quality of life for the majority of Irish Travellers. How they choose to fulfill their role will continue to influence the position of Travellers in Irish society. Unfortunately by continuing to focus their attention on the assimilation of Travellers into mainstream society, many local authorities (as with other areas of government), are ignoring the reality of the situation and rather than improving life for Travellers, they are enabling the marginalization of the Traveller community to continue.

In 2002, in a submission on *Article 25 of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities,* Pavee Point (2002) briefly reviewed legislation and social policy changes in regards to Irish Travellers. Pavee Point (2002, p.1) contended that while the introduction of recent legislation and social policies "have the capacity to improve the situation of Travellers", this is not reflected on the "ground" where "little has improved and in some areas the situation for Travellers has actually deteriorated". Pavee Point (2002, p.13) concluded that while there has been a positive development in the "fight against racism and intolerance" this has had a limited effect on the "daily lives of Travellers". In fact, more Travellers live on roadsides without proper facilities such as "water, electricity and sanitation, now than ten years ago" (p.13). As well, health care and educational opportunities remain outstanding issues for the Traveller community. While it is accepted that direct acts of discrimination have been outlawed, attempts to assimilate Travellers into mainstream society and the refusal to accept and protect the rights of Travellers to follow their cultural heritage continues to generate quality of life issues, and has in some way negated the potential redress created through recent legislation and social policies.

Conclusion

Chapter one has discussed the historical background of the Traveller community as an indigenous minority group in Ireland. By reviewing three state initiated reports on the status of Travellers, related legislation and social policies, this chapter has illustrated how government thinking on the position of Travellers in Ireland has evolved over the past four decades. The recent recognition of anti-Traveller racism and the move away from the previous welfare approach to a rights-based participatory approach to addressing Traveller issues are significant accomplishments. However without a full recognition and acceptance of Traveller traditions and ethnicity attempts to achieve greater equality for the Traveller community continue to falter (Helleiner, 2000). Thus in terms of quality of life issues today, it appears that little has changed — as Travellers remain a marginalized group that struggle with inadequate health care, accommodation, education and employment opportunities.

CHAPTER TWO
Policing in Ireland: A Community Perspective

This chapter examines policing in Ireland from a community-oriented policing perspective. It begins by exploring the development of An Garda Siochana, the national police force of Ireland, from its establishment in 1922 to the present day. It reviews debates on police accountability, as well as police/community relations, with consideration given to recent community-oriented policing initiatives. Finally, it considers the implications of different social values and priorities on efforts to improve police/community relations.

An Garda Siochana

An Garda Siochana (Gaelic for 'guardians of the peace') was established following the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922. In an effort to distinguish it from its predecessor, the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), the newly independent state sought to create an Irish police force built on public consent. Reflecting this ideological premise, the first Garda commissioner Michael Staines in 1922 stated that "the Garda Siochana will succeed, not by force of arms or numbers, but by their moral authority as servants of the people" (Connolly, 2002, p.493).

In general An Garda Siochana maintained the basic organizational structure of the RIC and followed a highly centralized system. Nevertheless, given the hostility felt by the public towards the RIC, efforts were made to distance the new policing system from its predecessor. In an attempt to solicit support and acceptance from the public, changes were introduced that demonstrated the 'Irishness' of the new police force. These changes included an adherence to

Roman Catholicism; the choice of a Gaelic name and the encouraged use of the native language; the maintenance of strict moral discipline including sobriety; and a focus on involvement in Gaelic sports. Another notable difference between the RIC and An Garda Siochana was that the majority of officers in the new police force were to remain unarmed, reflecting the notion of civic policing as opposed to a paramilitary approach (McNiffe, 1997).

Today the Garda Commissioner is formally in charge of the force and reports directly to the Minister of Justice. The force has maintained a centralized structure although changes have occurred in recent years. These changes include the development of community wardens as pilot projects in several local authority areas and the potential creation of a part-time police force recently introduced into legislation (Mulcahy, n.d.). Currently the force performs the standard police functions of crime prevention and detection as well as upholding its responsibilities in the areas of state security.

Even though immigration in the 1990s began to change Ireland from a predominantly white settled population to a more ethnically diverse society, An Garda Siochana has remained unchanged in terms of its ethnic composition. It currently employs close to 12,000 officers of whom the vast majority are white, with an estimated two officers from 'visible' ethnic minorities and up to three officers from the Irish Traveller community. Still the organization has taken steps to meet the expanding needs of a diverse nation. Evidence of this is apparent in its response to the recent incorporation of the European Union Convention on Human Rights into Irish domestic law, in which a greater emphasis is now being place on the issue of human rights during recruitment training. Another example is the creation of the *Garda Racial and Intercultural Office* which was established in response to the European Union funded conference held in

Dublin in April 2000 entitled, *Intercultural Ireland – Identifying the Challenges for the Police Service.*

Accountability and Oversight

In recent years specific events have negatively influenced the public perception of Ireland's national police force and have brought into question accepted practices within the organization (Connelly, 2002; O'Mahony, 2002; Mulcahy, n.d.). Of particular concern for marginalized groups is the finding of an international body, the *Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (CPT). In 1995 the CPT released a report which raised serious questions about the treatment of persons being detained in garda custody. From the information gathered by the CPT it was reported "that persons held in certain police establishments in Ireland – and more particularly in Dublin – run a not inconsiderable risk of being physically ill-treated". The type of ill-treatment described by the CPT included allegations that detainees in police custody were hit, slapped, punched and/or kicked. In a subsequent CPT report in 1999, similar allegations to those made in the 1995 report were indicated. It noted that the CPT (1999) "continued to receive allegations of physical and psychological ill-treatment of persons held in police custody in Dublin and elsewhere in the country". These CPT findings illustrate concerns that members of the police force in Ireland were not recognizing the human rights of people detained in their custody. This is particularly concerning for the most vulnerable members of society and while human rights' training has been introduced within An Garda Siochana, research indicates that individuals from minority groups such as Travellers still report being verbally and physically abused by individual police officers (Mulcahy & O'Mahony, 2005).

When An Garda Siochana was originally created it lacked "any formal process of external accountability whereby the public could hold its servants to account" (Connolly, 2002, p. 495). It was reasoned that officers lived and worked in their communities and were readily accessible to the people they served. It was therefore considered unnecessary to have any external formal process - as issues could be dealt with directly by front line officers. Consequently it was not until 1987 that an external mechanism was created to deal with complaints against individual officers. It was under the provisions of the *Garda Siochana (Complaints) Act 1986* that the *Garda Siochana Complaints Board* (GCSB) was established. The board was given the power to supervise investigations into complaints against individual officers, but the actual investigations continued to be carried out by members of the Garda Siochana (Mulcahy, n.d.).

Since its inception the GCSB has been criticized for its inability to represent "those who would be most likely to have a grievance with the Garda Siochana" (Connolly, 2002, p.502). It was in response to this growing criticism that the creation of a new independent body to investigate complaints against the police - the *Garda Siochana Ombudsman Commission* was recently introduced into the proposed *Garda Siochana Bill 2004*. The role and function of the new Garda Ombudsman follows along the lines of the *Office of the Police Ombudsman* in Northern Ireland, with powers that would extend well beyond those of the current GCSB (Patten Report, 1999; Irish Council for Civil Liberties, 2003). This would include the power to conduct independent investigations and the ability to operate with full authority outside of the Garda Siochana organizational structure.

Police/Community Consultation

Currently An Garda Siochana has addressed issues of police/community consultation through the introduction of several specific programs operated outside mainstream policing responsibilities. These include *Community Alert* and *Neighborhood Watch* programs which encourage members of the community "to report suspicious activity to the police" (Mulcahy, 2004, p.1). Other community-oriented initiatives include *Community Officers* and *Ethnic Liaison Officers*, who have been identified as the link between police and their communities. Also, youth diversion programs have received a great deal of support with a steady increase in proactive, crime prevention schemes being introduced in recent years (O'Mahony, 2002). While these and other similar programs have assisted police in reaching out to communities, currently only a very limited number of police officers are actually engaged in community-oriented policing activities, while the vast majority of officers have maintained their previous roles within An Garda Siochana.

However the introduction of police/community consultation into Irish society has received a great deal of attention in recent years (O'Mahony, 2002; Mulcahy & O'Mahony, 2005). It has been described by O'Mahony (2002) as being imperative if the challenges faced by Irish society are to be met today and in the future. He has also stressed the need for "effective new working relationships with all kinds of social agencies, which have an interest in crime reduction and prevention and enter into a new form of partnership with the general public and local communities" (p.429). This view has also been expressed in the *Irish Council for Civil Liberties* (ICCL) policy paper on Police Reform (2003):

> The effective delivery of our public policing mission requires An Garda Siochana, at all levels, to engage in consultation with members of the community at local, regional and national levels. The consultation process enables and empowers Gardai and communities to engage in dialogue. Such dialogue facilitates exchange of information, communication of concerns, building of mutual trust and cooperation, and identification of the needs of particular groups. The

consultation process reflects the essence of democratic policing and represents the basis upon which productive partnerships are developed, with a view to joint problem solving.

Hence with strong support for police/community consultation in Ireland, policy makers have recently introduced the *Garda Siochana Bill 2004*. Chapter four of the bill is devoted to the introduction of legislation that will direct police/community consultation in the future. It takes into consideration the views of the general public and focuses on the co-operation between local authorities and An Garda Siochana. Local authorities will assume responsibility for ensuring that the public has a consultative role in the development of policing services within their communities. The bill states that a "local authority and the Garda Commissioner shall arrange for the establishment of a joint policing committee" (JPC) and that the "joint policing committee's function is to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the local authority's administrative area" (Garda Siochana Bill, 2004, sec.31). This new role places local authorities in a position to directly influence the ways in which policing issues will be addressed within their communities, and heightens their ability to influence relations between community members and police. Given the way in which many local authorities have dealt with past issues pertaining to the Traveller community, including their inability to address the matter of inadequate accommodations, it is questionable how successful they will be at recognizing and addressing the policing needs of Travellers in the future.

Another concern is that while the proposed legislation provides a framework for the creation of policing committees it does not clearly outline a mechanism for community participation and to date policies have not been introduced to clarify the form police/community consultation will take (although these will be included in the guidelines for JPCs to be published later this year).

Community-Oriented Policing

In Ireland as well as internationally there continues to be a growing interest in the development of police/community relations. Yet even though a great deal of discussion around community-oriented policing has been generated globally, limited academic consideration has been given to the benefits and challenges of introducing this form of policing strategy into Irish society, particularly in relation to the unique dilemmas found in policing marginalized ethnic communities such as Irish Travellers. The following section provides an insight into the concept of community-oriented policing. It presents a contextual view of the benefits and challenges of introducing community-oriented policing into minority or marginalized communities.

What is Community-oriented Policing?

Community (oriented) policing has been described by many scholars as the only real contemporary policing model (Ponsaers, 2001; Skogan & Harnett, 1997; Tilley, 2002). Community-oriented policing began in response to a call for improved police/community relations. Community-oriented policing found its origins in the USA, where it was perceived that police organizations had distanced themselves from the general public, leading to growing mistrust which in turn created policing challenges within communities. Similarly in the 1970s, John Alderson argued that the traditional *authoritarian* policing model was not addressing growing crime rates in Britain, and that a "different community policing model was needed" (Tilley, 2003, p.311). Several years later the Scarman Report (1982), in response to the 1981 Brixton riots in the United Kingdom, emphasized the need for improved police/community relations. Today community-oriented policing has achieved global recognition and is seen by

many as an opportunity to engage police forces in various forms of consultative partnerships with members of their communities. Yet even though frequent reference has been made to community-oriented policing in literature today, the concept remains difficult to characterize and has been used to describe everything from organizational philosophy to mechanisms for police/public consultation, to specific crime prevention programs.

John Alderson (1979, p.199) described community policing as "a police force system for the future in a free, permissive and participatory society". Alderson (Tilley, 2002) subsequently introduced policing objectives which in part included the protection of human rights; the creation of trust within communities; the opportunity to curb public disorder; to investigate and prosecute crimes; and to strengthen feelings of security.

Moore (1994) observed that community (oriented) policing is not a simple concept - it involves philosophical reforms within the existing policing culture rather than just the introduction of a new tactical approach to police enforcement (Ponsaers, 2001). At the same time Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990: xiii-xv) saw community (oriented) policing as not just a philosophy but an organizational strategy which allows "community residents and police to work together in new ways to solve problems of crime, fear of crime, physical and social disorder and neighbourhood decay" (Tilley, 2002, p.314).

Although there remains numerous interpretations of community-oriented policing it is safe to say that community-oriented policing "stresses policing *with* and *for* the community rather than policing *of* the community" (Tilley, 2002, p.315). Its aim is "to improve the quality of life in communities" and in doing so "solve community problems alongside the community and as defined by the community" (p.315). Community-oriented policing provides a proactive problem-solving approach rather than responding to policing concerns in a reactive manner.

Unfortunately as Nick Tilley (2002) points out it is difficult to *pin down* what is involved in implementing this form of policing strategy. Tilley highlights the fact that many police practitioners and scholars have criticized *community policing* for its inherent ambiguity, feeling that "the phrase has been so often used imprecisely, it has been cheapened" (Bayley, quoted in Tilley, 2002, p. 315). Tilley goes on to propose that there is not only a problem in specifying the nature of community policing, but a difficulty in the use of the term *community* itself. He further indicates that even though the term community in community-oriented policing implies "shared norms, values and ways of life", and not necessarily a defined geographic area, in reality communities are most often defined as neighborhoods (p.315). This creates difficulties as neighborhoods can experience division over numerous issues such as "use of space, legitimate lifestyles and appropriate forms of policing" (p.315). In fact within "the practical purposes of community policing, members of the community normally comprise of self-selected citizens or representatives of other private sector, public sector or volunteer agencies", which may potentially exclude the people most effected by the type of policing strategies introduced into their communities (p.315).

Taking a different approach, Trojanowicz, Guggenheim & Guggenheim (1988) chose to distinguish between a *geographic community* and a *community of interest* when explaining the concept of community in community policing. They demonstrated that changes in modern conceptions of community have been influenced by developments in mass transportation, mass communications, and mass media. Such changes in technology have shifted the notion of community away from a group of people who share close social networks based strictly on geographic proximity to those who are brought together by their common interests. Therefore people's experiences may depend on their membership in a community of interest rather than

their residence. Trojanowicz, Guggenheim & Guggenheim (1988) also considered the growing inequity between the wealthy and poor communities, emphasizing that a community's socio-economic position in society correlates with its ability to access modern technologies and influences whether its residents are able to connect outside of their neighborhood to the larger community of interest. This creates new challenges for police who attempt to address the complex and diverse issues found in all aspects of the modern community. From this perspective police organizations need to address the issues of crime, disorder, and fear of crime in an effort to "provide modern communities and the police with a mutual community of interest that can allow for meaningful interaction" (p.9).

Unfortunately areas where police/community partnerships are least required tend to be the easiest to implement meaningful interactions, while areas where such partnerships are most needed tend to be the hardest to create successful partnerships. For that reason apart from the difficulty in characterizing community-oriented policing, research also suggests that communities with the highest levels of mistrust for the police, including ethnic minority groups and marginalized communities, have proven to be the least enthusiastic about embracing this style of policing (Tilley, 2002; Thacher; 2001; Rowe, 2004). This would suggest that mutual trust is a key factor in the successful implementation of a community-oriented policing approach. Therefore, exploring the reasons why a community has developed mistrust for police and how trust can be regained are important factors to consider when developing new community-oriented policing strategies. Also from the perspective of many police officers, community policing is not always viewed as real police work and therefore does not receive the same acknowledgement and opportunities for advancement as involvement in serious *crime fighting* activities (Skogan and Hartnett, 1997; Tilley, 2002; Rowe, 2004).

The issue of conflicting values and priorities can create dilemmas for police organizations wishing to introduce community-oriented policing strategies into their existing structures. How can police organizations attend to the conflicting values and priorities of their members? What impact do conflicting values and priorities have on the successful introduction of community-oriented policing within the organizational structure? These questions should to be considered when introducing community-orienting policing strategies, to ensure that meaningful interaction between police and communities are not jeopardized because of inconsistency in the way in which police officers represent the values and priorities of the organization.

A further quandary for police organizations is finding creative ways to address issues that may arise when community values come in conflict with those of police and potentially jeopardizing the successful creation of police/community partnerships.

Value Conflicts and Police/Community Consultation

David Thacher (2001) provides a unique view of community-oriented policing in *Conflicting Values in Community Policing*. He considers the impact of building police/community relationships based on the differing social values of community organizations. Thacher uses specific case studies "to describe how these conflicts surface and potentially undermine partnerships," and then "analyzes the strategies that police agencies have developed to respond to them" (Thacher, 2001, p.765). He begins by outlining the belief that every society is made up of various social institutions and that each encompasses their own set of values. Therefore every social institution has the potential of being in conflict with others as it pursues its own separate priorities. He contends that this creates a unique challenge for police organizations attempting to generate partnerships within community settings.

Thacher (2001, p.775) analyzes eleven case studies and offers "an interpretation of two value conflicts that arose in these cases". The first conflict relates to the tension created "over what aspects of 'safety' deserve most attention, in which the 'hard crime' perspective of police conflicts with the 'soft crime' concerns of the community" (p.776). Police tend to view serious crime offenses as central to addressing public safety, while community groups tend to be more concerned with public disorder offenses – such as the noisy teenagers with the boom box, the small time dealer selling drugs on the corner and traffic violation– as they directly relate to the quality of life for residents.

The study also found that communities were inclined to broadly define the role of police in maintaining public order and held them responsible by "withdrawing support and cooperation, so that when police want to maintain strong community ties, they often find that they must increase their attention to the disorder problems that they have traditionally viewed as distracting" (Thacher, 2001, p.776). It appears that relationships can more easily be forged between the police and communities when police are prepared to accommodate community concerns and address soft crime issues. This does not necessarily mean that police have to abandon their focus on hard crime. In fact many police departments demonstrated their ability to establish an intellectual link between the two concepts. Following the *Broken Windows* theory which encourages the increased use of police authority (Wilson & Kelling, 1982), many officers rationalized that the enforcement of misdemeanor laws had a direct influence on the control of serious crime. They argue that "offenders of minor violations often turn out to have such signs of serious criminality as illegal drugs, illegally concealed weapons, or outstanding warrants" (p.778). Consequently through reinterpreting the value of order maintenance as a way to seek out potential criminal activities, officers were more prepared to address public order offenses.

However there is a down side to the broken windows thesis – as it has the "potential to exacerbate a tension, always present in policing, between the exercise of authority (often approved or even demanded by the community) and the desires of the community to be left alone (sometimes expressed by the same community members who ask for stronger enforcement)" (p.782). Of even greater concern is the aggressive use of police authority when it conflicts with "community values particularly in neighborhoods where concerns about harassment have been predominate" (p. 799). This is demonstrated in situations where police leaders and politicians have embraced the idea of *broken windows* in the context of *zero tolerance* policing strategies. Utilizing these strategies provides for a more heavy-handed law-enforcement approach that can easily veer into an "oppressive style of policing which is against, rather than with, the community" - losing the focus of improving relations with the public (O'Donnell and O'Sullivan, 2003, p.50).

Within the Irish context *zero tolerance* policing strategies came to prevalence in 1996 responding to public fears that the country was becoming lawless. Interestingly Ireland is a country with a traditionally low official crime rate that began decreasing in 1995. It was therefore not an increase in crime but the "murders of a police officer and journalist in 1996" that sparked the sudden interest, by the public, in crime and led to "a transformation of the criminal justice landscape" (O'Donnell and O'Sullivan, 2003, p.41). One government strategy was to address public fears by following a New York approach to zero tolerance policing. By aggressively "tackling quality of life issues such as begging, prostitution and street disorder" it was believed that serious crimes would be reduced (p.55). This however has not been demonstrated in Ireland as a "more intense focus on nuisance offences has not brought down the rate of violent crime" and "thus the promise of 'zero tolerance' has not been realized" (p.55). In

fact recent years have shown an increase in the number of serious offenses such as murder, rape, assault and wounding (O'Donnell and O'Sullivan, 2003).

Thacher describes the overuse of police authority as the second potential conflict area influencing police/community partnerships. This is particularly significant within minority and marginalized communities - where it is viewed that police regularly harass and misuse their authority. Police harassment and misuse of authority has often been characterized by *over-policing* and *under-protection* (Rowe, 2004; Mulcahy & O'Mahony, 2005). Thacher also found that these issues led to communities displaying a high level of distrust for police and as discussed earlier in this chapter, significantly affected communities' willingness to engage in police/community consultation.

Conflicting Values in Community Policing explores what can occur when police and community members attempt to come to terms with conflicting values with the desire to create effective police/community partnerships. Absolute solutions to the issue of conflicting values are not provided, instead Thacher reminds us that in the area of community-oriented policing more explicit consideration should be given to the link between partnerships and basic values, "for the failure to emphasize it can make reform seem too simple – an apple-pie issue of 'getting closer to the community' or a technical issue of effective implementation" (p.791). Leaving police organizations in a position where they may not comprehend or be prepared to deal with communities' apparent resistance to the introduction of police/community partnerships.

Conclusion

The first section of this chapter provided a brief history of An Garda Siochana, discussing issues of accountability, police/community relations and the recent introduction of community-

oriented policing strategies into the existing organizational structure. The concluding section focused on community-oriented policing; considering the dilemmas that arise when one attempts to define community-oriented policing; the potential benefits and challenges encountered when implementing this policing style; and the role social values play in the introduction of police/community partnerships. The goal of this discussion has been to provide a frame of reference within which to examine relations between Travellers and police, and to consider in particular the potential for developing community-oriented policing initiatives which might successfully address the current difficulties in this relationship.

CHAPTER THREE
Methodology

An Action Research Project

An action research methodology was chosen for this project because of its commitment to addressing concrete problems with the full participation of those who are the focus of the research. Such an approach allows for the unique differences in awareness and experience between individuals from mainstream society and those from marginalized situations. The belief that "we construct reality on the basis of our understandings, which are largely, though not completely, culturally shared" is central to this approach (Palys, 1997, p.412). Therefore throughout this research process it was important to consider the parameters within which Travellers and the police define their relationship. In this way the perceptions of each party are explored and the barriers that currently impress on the existing relationship can be revealed and addressed.

Action research also addresses the concerns of a community by broadening the understanding of a specific situation with the goal of successfully promoting social change - through the use of a spiral process that focuses on thought, action and critical reflection. Therefore unlike other more traditional survey methodologies, action research embraces a participatory approach and allows for those who might otherwise not be represented (such as the disenfranchised and marginalized groups within a community) to have a voice (Mulcahy & O'Mahony, 2005).

At the beginning of this research project it was hypothesized that in order to fully understand the issues regarding relations between Travellers and police one must first explore the experiences of the two groups. It was further assumed that gathering empirical data based on the experiences and views of Travellers and police would provide a foundation on which to develop future police/community consultation opportunities. This was of particular importance given recent exploratory research findings which suggested that Travellers' desire to be consulted and involved in policy-making decisions related to policing issues in their community (Mulcahy & O'Mahony, 2005).

It should also be noted that the findings presented in this report are reflective of several key themes identified during the research process. These themes reflect one objective which was to understand relations between Travellers and police, and explore their views of community-oriented policing, in order to identify existing strengths and potential barriers that could impact on the introduction of consultative policing initiatives for the Traveller community.

The Sponsoring Organization

Pavee Point is one of a number of organizations within the Republic of Ireland whose focus is to support members of the Traveller community.

> Pavee Point is a voluntary or non-governmental which is committed to human rights for Irish Travellers. The group comprises Travellers and members of the majority population working together in partnership to address the needs of Travellers as a minority group which experiences exclusion and marginalization.
> The aim of Pavee Point is to contribute to improvement in the quality of life and living circumstances of Irish Travellers through working for social justice, solidarity, socio-economic development and human rights (Pavee Point, 2000, p.1).

During the past decade Pavee Point has recognized the poor state of relations between Travellers and An Garda Siochana and the impact this has had on the quality of policing service

delivered to the Traveller community. In efforts to improve this situation Pavee Point has provided various programs and initiatives to police and Travellers. Examples include delivering anti-racism and cultural awareness training to police recruits and more recently to groups of newly appointed ethnic liaison officers; participation in numerous garda intercultural and human rights policing initiatives; and relationship building activities at a local level including facilitating meetings between police and Travellers that offer space for information exchange, dialogue and problem-solving. While Travellers are generally suspicious and fearful of gardai, Pavee Point appears to have been successful in providing a safe environment in which many Travellers have engaged in face-to-face interaction with individuals from An Garda Siochana.

As the sponsor of this project, Pavee Point has provided resources and support throughout the research process and it is hoped that the knowledge gained from this work will assist Pavee Point in its continued efforts to improve relations between the Traveller community and An Garda Siochana.

Research Participants and Process

The research comprised of interviews with thirty-three individuals, including members from the Traveller community, An Garda Siochana and local authority representatives. A priority was given to gathering research data from Travellers and for that reason the vast majority of those interviewed were from the Traveller community. With the exception of two interviewees all individuals lived and/or worked in County Dublin. While the type of accommodations varied among the Travellers interviewed (from halting sites, mobile homes, group housing schemes, local authority housing, and privately owned homes), all of the Travellers interviewed would consider themselves as leading a more sedentary lifestyle at this time. The twenty-six Traveller

interviewees were recruited through the sponsor organization, Pavee Point. There was an effort made to interview a cross-section of individuals from the community including five men, fourteen women and seven youth (ages 14 to 18 years).

In addition, five individuals from An Garda Siochana were chosen because of their interest and/or involvement in special programs that focused on human rights and the policing of minority groups. These individuals included an ethnic liaison officer, a community officer, an inspector from a local garda station, a member of the racial and intercultural team, and a member from the community relations unit.

Two local authority representatives were also interviewed because of their direct interest in community issues and the new legislative role they will assume when the *Garda Siochana Bill 2004* is implemented.

Interviews were conducted between August and September, 2004 and all Traveller interviews took place in facilities made available by Pavee Point Traveller Centre. A qualitative approach was used to collect information as the use of quantitative measures was considered inappropriately formal for gaining insight into such nuanced – and potentially controversial – issues as Travellers' levels of trust and confidence in the police. The two methods used to interview the participants included face-to-face individual interviews and focus groups. Individual interviews consisted of six interviews with members of the Traveller community, all five members of An Garda Siochana and both local authority representatives. In my role as researcher, I also facilitated three focus groups made up of members from the Traveller community. The groups were broken into three categories: women, men and youth (unfortunately only male youths agreed to participate in the group).

Concern over the literacy levels of many Travellers was identified at the start of the project and for that reason all information was shared orally, (providing ample opportunity for questions to be asked) and included written information (Appendix 2) outlining the proposed project, the consent forms (Appendix 3) and the prepared written questions (Appendix 4, 5 and 6). I also attempted to structure interviews to meet the specific needs of the participants. This included allowing for open dialogue which extended beyond the prepared questions. With the exception of one focus group the researcher documented in writing interviewees' comments. In the case of one focus group, responses were taped and later transcribed into written form. Traveller interviewees were hesitant about agreeing to meet with the researcher and many individuals indicated that they were nervous about being interviewed. However when the interviews began, with the exception of the male youths, all interviewees actively participated in the process and indicated that they were comfortable with the interview process. I found the interviews with male youth challenging because of their apparent unwillingness to focus seriously on the topic throughout the interviews. This was displayed in two forms: either in a dismissive attitude towards the researcher and the questions being asked, or (as in the focus group) through a tendency to engage in distracting behaviors. I considered the possibility that their behavior could relate to a general mistrust of any (adult) individual outside of their community or they may have felt a greater level of vulnerability than other Travellers. I also found with the youth respondents that I was frequently asked to clarify many of the prepared questions. I have considered the possibility that they found it more challenging to provide insight into the questions presented due to their more limited life experiences and level of maturity. However regardless of the issues that arose when interviewing male youth, I believe it is worth considering the importance of their participation – however limited - as they represent an

important voice for the future of the Traveller community. For that reason I believe it would be valuable to specifically focus on relations between Traveller youth and the police in future research.

Ethical Consideration

The subject matter of this project was extremely sensitive in nature and required special ethical consideration. As a marginalized group Travellers share feelings of disempowerment and vulnerability and therefore are extremely mistrustful of individuals outside of their community. As well their relationship with An Garda Siochana is often characterized by fear and suspicion. For that reason completing a research study of this nature with the participation of Travellers was challenging and would not have been possible without the support of Pavee Point (even though many Travellers shared the belief that the issues discussed in the research study were important to the Traveller community). Further indication of Traveller vulnerability was apparent when they articulated a fear that their comments (made during the interviews) would be shared among other members of the Traveller community, Pavee Point staff or police. Therefore additional time was taken outside of the actual interviews to assure Travellers that all data gathered remained confidential – not to be shared – and would only be used for the purposes of the research.

Even though all Traveller interviewees currently reside in the Dublin area they indicated in their responses that their views were reflective of the opinions held by the majority of Travellers across Ireland. Also despite the controversial and sensitive nature of the research, I am confident in the overall findings because a degree of saturation was reached, in which many

of the comments made by the respondents were similar in nature and tended to be repeated by various respondents during the interview process.

CHAPTER FOUR
Findings and Analysis

This chapter presents and analyses the findings that emerged from this research study. In order to illustrate the findings in a systematic manner the chapter has been divided into four sections, each representing a key theme that emerged throughout the research process. These sections deal in turn with: police/community relations; the use of police authority; quality of life and public safety; and community-oriented policing. At the conclusion of this chapter an analysis of the research findings will provide the framework for the final recommendations.

Police/Community Relations

When asked about relations between Travellers and police most interviewees immediately commented on the extreme mistrust that exists between the two groups. However it is important to look beyond this broad concept and identify factors that have contributed to individual attitudes, views and actions in order to fully comprehend the scope of the existing mistrust and the potential impact it has on strategies to improve relations, including the introduction of community-oriented policing initiatives.

Perceptions of the Traveller Community

Travellers believe that they are negatively perceived by the majority settled population which has directly influenced the attitudes of police. Travellers also indicate that police officers perceive them to be socially inferior to every other group in society, including the poor and other minority groups and discriminate against individuals based on membership in the Traveller

community. As noted by one male Traveller: *"poverty people are treated as third class but Travellers are the low of the low"*. They further believe that irregardless of other factors including economic status, gender, or accommodations, police officers consider all Travellers to occupy a lower social position in comparison to any group from the settled community. *"It doesn't matter what class you [Traveller] are – you are still a knacker to them [police]"*. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that there are slight distinctions between specific Traveller groups. These distinctions are worth noting as they reflect unique challenges faced by individuals within the community.

Female Travellers indicated that they are treated as *"lower"* down the social scale than men. Several women stated that when gardai come into their area they speak with men – and do not even acknowledge women – nor take the issue of domestic violence seriously. They reinforced these views by stating that in their experience police officers do not always document incidents of domestic violence involving Traveller women because police do not have the same level of respect for them. As emphasized by several female Travellers: *"in cases of violence against women there are often no records kept – where is the accountability?"*

From a male perspective, one male interviewee felt that Traveller men have been stereotyped as violent and aggressive and this negatively impacts on how police interact with them. Male youth believe that they have the poorest relationship with police, and that Traveller women have the best relationship because *"women will go to the guards when they have a problem"*. It is unclear why there were differing views relating to contact between Traveller women and police. It is possible that female Travellers were commenting on the nature and outcome of their contact, which they would describe as dismissive on the part of police, rather than the number of times they would be in contact with individual police officers.

When Traveller respondents were asked to discuss their views on the impact of following a traditional nomadic way of life as opposed to a more sedentary lifestyle, the opinions among Travellers focused on the challenges experienced by each group when dealing with police. For example it was felt that Travellers living a nomadic way of life experienced negative interaction when the trespass law - *Housing (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 2002* - was enforced by police. As one Traveller commented, *"the guards can move them [Travellers] on at any time – under the trespass laws a knacker can technically be on the move 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – you know – 52 weeks a year"*. There was an overwhelming view by Travellers that this law was designed specifically to challenge their cultural identity and demonstrated government's negative attitude towards their traditional way of life. These views mirror the previous discussions in chapter one which illustrated continued efforts by the state to discourage nomadism and its desire to assimilate Travellers into mainstream Irish society.

While Travellers following a more nomadic way of life struggle with the trespass law, it was also believed that individuals living more sedentary lifestyles had a better chance of being known by local police officers, which in negative terms provided police with more opportunity to watch, harass and try to solicit information from them.

> *"If they [police] see you in the same place they are going to recognize you but if you are in a different area they might not think you are a Traveller. There are a lot of Travellers that don't look like Travellers. If they move around from town to town they might not bother them but if they [police] know they were Travellers, they [police] would be on their case – so it could actually be worse if they [police] found out"*. [Traveller Respondent]

> *"When you are sedentary you are quite easy prey because the guards know where you live and they know when you are coming and going"*. [Traveller Respondent]

Therefore, while it is believed that slight differences exist in the experiences of various Traveller groups, in most cases Travellers perceived that involvement with police is most often

negative and to be avoided, and that police do not deal with them as individuals but as part of a marginalized group.

> *"It doesn't matter [how you live] they [police] are still intimidating and patronizing". [Traveller Respondent]*

Traveller interviewees believe that all Travellers are being characterized by police as law breakers and criminals, and that police fail to accord them the same level of respect provided to the settled population. As one Traveller commented, the guards are not willing *"to accept that Travellers are people too and there is good and bad, right and wrong – but they are generalizing, they are painting every Traveller in the country with the one brush".*

Nevertheless even though Travellers felt that they were poorly treated by police many respondents were able to describe individual situations in which police had treated Travellers with respect and consideration. Unfortunately they were also quick to point out that these situations were exceptions and not the normal treatment they would expect to receive.

From a police perspective, interviewees expressed a positive attitude towards the Traveller community; however they did not feel that their opinion was shared by all members of the police force. The primary reason given was that most officers *"on the ground"*, excluding individuals involved in special community programs and activities (such as those interviewed) would only encounter Travellers when checking for illegal activities, such as motor vehicle violations, or when Travellers were involved in some form of criminal or anti-social behavior. Unlike the officers that are solely involved in standard police duties – those interviewed have been in positions to interact with Travellers outside of their *"crime-fighting"* role. The consensus was that this influenced their views of Travellers. One police respondent, who has worked in his community for over two decades, shared his perception of Travellers in his area:

"I would know them [Travellers] on a first name basis in the area and they would know me. Things have changed for the Travellers – they are getting wealthy and driving new cars. I don't have a problem talking to the Travellers – they will come to the station and provide information if they are expecting trouble. I think there is more trust than in the past. They will stand and talk to you on the street. They are more confident and happier...... As they conform to society and become the same as ourselves many of the problems will disappear. Now only the minority of Travellers are criminals –but all Travellers are marginalized".

There was also a view that the settled populations' negative opinion of the Traveller community formed many officers' beliefs and attitudes long before they began their training with An Garda Siochana and consequently influenced how they functioned within the organization. This perspective reinforced Travellers' opinion that Irish society has influenced the negative attitudes of police officers. Yet police interviewees felt that negative perceptions of Travellers were not reflective of An Garda Siochana as an organization. Recent policing initiatives such as the establishment of the *Garda Racial and Intercultural Unit,* the appointment of *ethnic liaison officers* and the introduction of an *anti-racism training module* for new recruits were some of the examples used to demonstrate the organization's desire to improve policing services to minority groups. Unfortunately as one police interviewee described:

"There are training opportunities for guards but they are not available to everyone - information is there but not everyone accesses it. An example is a booklet" that provides information on minority groups – including diverse cultures, religions, traditions and languages.

There appears to be an overriding consensus by gardai and Travellers that many members of An Garda Siochana share the majority settled population's negative perception of the Traveller community. I can only assume that this has impacted on police/Traveller relations and highlights the dilemmas faced by decision-makers within An Garda Siochana. How can effective change be created within a police organization when some of the problems are constructed outside the organizational system? How can managers address the perceptions of officers *"on the*

ground" when their only contact with Travellers is in a negative context? Do these attitudes have an impact on the way policing services are delivered to the Traveller community? What effect do the current community-oriented programs have on the way policing services are provided to Travellers today? These issues will need to be considered by An Garda Siochana in the future if it wishes to continue pursuing an effective community-oriented policing model.

Police interviewees also shared the perception that Travellers are not open with individuals outside of their community.

> *"They [Travellers] are not open and therefore there is a lot that is not known about them. Why do they still beg for money? What do they do for money"? [Police Respondent]*

Travellers acknowledge that they are mistrustful – sharing the general opinion that they risk becoming vulnerable by becoming more closely involved with – and therefore known to outsiders, including police.

> *"That's the point I'm making – it is going to be extremely hard for Travellers to either trust or accept guards at face value – this is with the general community right across the board". [Traveller Respondent]*

Vulnerability and Knowledge

Travellers' knowledge of An Garda Siochana emerged as an issue of clear importance. Responses from Travellers indicated that they possess a minimal understanding of An Garda Siochana and the laws that dictate the actions of police. This was the case for all Travellers with the exception of those who worked for Pavee Point in areas related to policing. Nonetheless Travellers expressed an overwhelming interest in learning more about An Garda Siochana from a personal as well as community perspective. Their primary focus was to gain greater knowledge in the areas of Irish law and human rights. All Travellers expressed high levels of vulnerability and therefore felt that gaining awareness in those areas would assist in protecting them from the

actions of police. Within this context several individuals described examples of officers' searching premises without appropriate warrants.

> *"Caravans are invaded at the crack of dawn – without proper documentation without proper search warrants, they go in and they search ... it would be good to know what our human rights are – what are our rights in general"? [Traveller Respondent]*

> *"A lot of them [guards] don't bring search warrants and just say they have one. They were at my cousins... I started roaring and shouting –where is your warrant and all that and I said they [other Travellers] were stupid letting them go in without a search warrant. ... I go up to the guy [guard] and ask - do you have a warrant...He said while I'll get you on the road he says I know your face he says ... You see I was supposed to keep quiet now because he gives me a warning. I was the only fellow who spoke up - so if we all would do that it might not happen so often". [Traveller Respondent]*

It is important to emphasize that because of high levels of illiteracy among Travellers it is often difficult for many individuals to question any documentation provided by police. Therefore given their general lack of education and marginalized standing in society, it is not surprising that many Travellers identified a link between knowledge and empowerment – recognizing that gaining knowledge and information on human rights and the law placed them in a stronger position to address issues with An Garda Siochana. This perception was reinforced by Travellers' belief that police are more responsive to the more affluent majority settled population because this portion of society has the money and education to hold police accountable for their actions. Hence it appears from these findings that Travellers are most concerned with gaining knowledge in order to protect themselves from the abuse of police authority rather than learning more about access to policing services.

Travellers' limited understanding of the law and An Garda Siochana was also concerning to the gardai. Gardai stated that conflicts sometimes emerge between themselves and members of the Traveller community because Travellers do not always understand the role of police. They

described situations where Travellers have been confused about the limited authority the police have to deal with human rights issues, such as situations where individuals are refused access to public places. They felt that some of the conflicts could be avoided if Travellers had a better knowledge of the law and policing services. From these findings it is clear that while Travellers and police perceive these issues differently, both recognized the benefits in providing the Traveller community with an opportunity to learn more about Irish law and An Garda Siochana.

The Issue of Travellers Accommodation

Individuals from the Traveller community and members of An Garda Siochana stressed the significant impact that Traveller nomadism and the accommodation issue have on various aspects of Traveller life in Ireland. Both groups felt that these issues have influenced the policing needs of Travellers as well as the way in which they receive services. The complexities of Traveller accommodation issues have previously been discussed in a legislative context, but here I discuss them in terms of the impact they have on public safety concerns within the Traveller community. As described earlier, the recent introduction of the *Housing (Miscellaneous) Act 2002* has served to criminalize a key dimension of traditional nomadic lifestyles, and does so in a situation whereby the issue of accommodation has not yet been resolved by the provision of appropriate Traveller-specific accommodation. Without the provision of feasible alternatives this escalates potential conflicts by engaging police in what previously was outside of their sphere of activity.

Some respondents found that certain areas supporting Traveller-specific accommodation tended to accommodate large numbers of people together in close proximity, which created

tensions between individuals and groups, leading to an increase in arguments and feuds among

Traveller residents.

> *"There are too many Travellers living in one area and this creates tension between families and creates feuds that are unnecessary. The local government is making it worse - in the Finglas area - housing estates and halting sites have been piled together creating conflicts between residents."* [Traveller Respondent]

> *"The Traveller site in the area is the largest encampment in the country. It is a problem because you have so many people together in one place".* [Police Respondent]

It is important to note that while some Travellers criticized the notion of large Traveller-specific

areas, they did not indicate that they would prefer to abandon all Traveller-specific

accommodations and integrate into settled areas.

Gardai also felt that large Traveller-specific areas have created problems. Two police

respondents were of the opinion that problems arise for members of the Traveller community

because they are *"standing out"* by not following the social norms in Ireland and choosing

instead to preserve their nomadic way of life. They also felt that *"integration with the rest of*

society" rather than being isolated in areas away from the settled community, is the best way to

resolve Traveller problems. Some gardai were opposed to Traveller-specific accommodations

because they felt that Travellers should move into standard housing in an effort to minimize

conflicts occurring between members of the Traveller community. There was also a concern for

individuals' quality of life when living in impoverished areas.

> *"There is ongoing problems with housing accommodations. Travellers should be integrated - not good for them to be in deprived areas".* [Police Respondent]

> *"Having people living in areas where there are constant troubles is not good for the Travellers − but it is hard for them to find accommodations within other areas".* [Police Respondent]

Local authority representatives felt that their role as landlords required that they have knowledge of what occurs within their accommodations and a responsibility to manage them appropriately. In order to fulfill these responsibilities they work closely with the police from their vicinity. This moves into a second area of concern, namely, the public order role police play in assisting local authorities with the enforcement of orders relating to accommodations. It has been suggested that in situations such as standard evictions from housing, roadside encampments or halting sites, a police presence is often requested by local authorities before problems occur. Many Travellers shared strong negative views of the role police take in supporting local authorities in such circumstances. There was a sense that Travellers perceive themselves as victims of the greater social system which includes local authorities and police.

> *"They [local authorities] provide housing and they use the guards to pull people out of their homes – its dirty work". [Police Respondent]*

> *"Of course if the county council wants to move you or hassle you in any way at all – often they have the guards waiting there in the first place". [Traveller Respondent]*

> *"The local authorities give guards all the dirty work – like evictions". [Traveller Respondent]*

> *"It is just the oppression you know – it is hard to explain. You have to be a Traveller to understand what it is like to get up in the morning and if you were never discriminated against – but it is always in your head. Am I going to be discriminated against? And that is the difference between the Traveller and the settled person in Ireland". [Traveller Respondent]*

A final concern was expressed by a police interviewee, who indicated that in the course of making inquiries into criminal activities, it can be increasingly challenging for police to determine the identity of Travellers that follow a nomadic lifestyle.

> *"They don't have fixed addresses and they are often able to scam the system ...For example it is impossible at times to determine which [individual] you are dealing with". [Police Respondent]*

The Use of Police Authority

As previously discussed, research suggests that when a community displays a high level of mistrust for police there is a tendency for the community to withhold support and co-operation, leaving police organizations to provide policing services and solve crime without the active input of the community. The tactics employed by police, which are perceived by the community as aggressive use of police authority, are often described as police harassment or *over policing* and tend to further increase the levels of mistrust between police and the public (Thacher, 2000; Mulcahy and O'Mahony, 2005; Rowe, 2004). Given the introduction of a *zero tolerance* approach by the Irish government in the 1990s it is not surprising that such tactics have been employed by gardai. One example illustrated by interviewees was the use of a *stop and search* approach by police officers. Police target Traveller vehicles checking for tax, registration and licenses then use this opportunity to search for stolen property and to gather information relating to criminal or anti-social activities. Travellers indicated that they are frequently harassed and placed under pressure by police to provide information concerning criminal activities occurring within their community. A common scenario, described by Travellers, was police officers agreeing not to pursue court action on minor offenses if Travellers provide information related to more serious crimes.

> *"He [guard] said give me something in return and I will see that this charge [traffic violation] won't see court ..." [Traveller Respondent]*

> *A Traveller gets picked up for a minor offence and in order to avoid court he tells the guards that he knows where a gun is hidden. In fact he has bought a gun and buried it in a field so that he can use it to get off of going to court when he is arrested for a crime he committed. This isn't right. If someone commits a crime they should go to court for it. [Traveller Respondent]*

While these strategies may appear to achieve the desired outcome for police in the short-term, they do nothing to improve relations between police and the community and in fact lead to a greater level of animosity between the two groups. For that reason these types of policing strategies are counter productive to the introduction of community-oriented policing strategies, where the goal of the police organization is to created strong police/community partnerships.

When exploring the use of police authority within An Garda Siochana the issue of police misconduct was raised by Travellers in relation to intimidation, discrimination, and racist actions (including physical and verbal abuse).

"This is the honest truth – three guards gave me a beating, they call me a 'knacker' ... three guards walk into the cell and beat me ... two held me down ...I was absolutely black and blue ... they let me out .... The sergeant says if you act up Mr. I will put you back in the cell. Three yolks beat me but he says that if I say anything they will throw me back in the cell. What could I do? I had to shut up." [Traveller Respondent]

A pregnant Traveller woman outside of a pub was told by a guard that he would "kick the thing out of her" if she didn't move on. [Traveller Respondents]

"Guards frequently use racist language" such as "knackers" and ask derogatory questions such as "when did you last take a shower". [Traveller Respondents]

Guards "arrested me and a friend of mine because I had a word or two with the bar staff .... So we were brought to the police station and locked us up for a good few hours there anyway. So I walked in and they knew I had money because the next day was St. Patrick's Day ...they asked me to count how much I had in my pockets. So I counted out a hundred and fifty euros ...and then he came back with a bail note for a hundred and fifty – so I didn't want to give it to him – so I wasn't going to get out without given it to him no matter how it went. So someone was standing there and I said - if you want the money you come and take it out of my pocket because I'm not giving it to you. So then the sergeant walked in and I got to see the sergeant and he give me a few slaps and I handed over the money basically I didn't want to put up with any more abuse. ...So that is how bad they can be as well – you're the lowest of the low and what are you going to do about it?" [Traveller Respondent]

While these accounts can not be confirmed within the context of this study, these and other similar stories were described by most Traveller interviewees and are seen as factual accounts by members of the Traveller community. Consequently the relevance of these stories can not be ignored as they influence the opinions held by Travellers towards police and strongly reinforce the mistrust that currently exists. Furthermore as discussed in chapter two, even though these accounts are not confirmed in the findings, the existence of physical mistreatment and verbal abuse of individuals detained in police custody in Ireland has been well documented by the *Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.*

Quality of Life and Public Safety

In an effort to determine policing issues for Travellers and gardai, interviewees were asked to indicate what they saw as their primary policing concerns. Many of the same concerns were shared by both groups. These included concerns for anti-social behaviors related to alcohol abuse; the introduction of illegal drugs; illegal dumping; robbery and violence. Apart from these issues Travellers were concerned with issues directly impacting their quality of life and public safety such as intimidation within the Traveller community; incidents of domestic violence; as well as ongoing feuds, arguments and violence. Gardai appeared to focus on factors that encompassed their work and the overall concerns of Irish society. Their additional concerns included the destruction of property, Traveller women not being prepared to report domestic abuse, and unauthorized encampments.

Illegal Drugs

It was the unanimous opinion of interviewees that a major concern for the Traveller community is the recent introduction of illegal drugs, which are seen to be the primary cause of increases in anti-social and criminal activities.

> *"The biggest concern I have is drugs. The amount of it that is going on in the Traveller area in a short period of time – I mean a short period of time...The drugs have gone from almost zero to huge. I mean it's disproportionate".* *[Traveller Respondent]*

> *"I don't think that any of us have not been touched in the last number of years by someone we know or someone close who has been involved in drugs". [Traveller Respondent]*

> *"Drug dealing is a big thing – young fellows getting in debt to the drug dealers and then being forced to sell drugs. They [police] seem blind to this. It doesn't happen in the rich areas". [Traveller Respondent]*

All individuals interviewed indicated that the use of illegal drugs has only become an issue for the Traveller community in the past 10 to 15 years. Yet all Travellers were able to provide examples of individuals, including close family members and friends, who have become involved in the use of illegal drugs. As well it was suggested by one focus group that due to a lack of visible policing presence in certain Traveller neighborhoods, individuals from settled communities were also using the Traveller neighborhoods for their drug trade. This would suggest that there is recognition from other groups in Irish society that Traveller neighborhoods are not adequately policed, leading to some areas becoming more susceptible to criminal activities and creating the potential for the greater victimization of residents.

Perception of Safety

The lack of police support was mentioned by all Traveller interviewees and appeared consistent with previous research findings on the policing of marginalized communities

(Mulcahy & O'Mahony, 2005). Travellers indicated that when arguments and feuds took place within the Traveller community, police would often take a *"wait and let them [Travellers] sort it out themselves"* approach to dealing with requests for police assistance. Below are descriptions provided by two Travellers, which illustrate what they believe is a lack of policing response on the part of An Garda Siochana:

> *"Everyone has rows and arguments especially when there are drinking problems. Police are often called where I live ...now there were two arguments and shots were fired and things like that and they [guards] waited outside the gates until everything is stopped, then they will come in and arrest you and charge you sky high. That is poor quality [service] they show you".*

> *"I have seen it first hand on site where families were being intimidated, abused and beat up, but the guards will not move in until they [Travellers] have done extreme damage to one another and then they will move in ...People who want the guards to come in ... where there are bare knuckle and arguments. I have seen where bare knuckle takes place and it is the last resort because they [Travellers] have tried to use the guards to sort it. I have seen some families have to leave the country never mind the county Dublin and it is because the guards will not do their jobs and they discriminate against Travellers. Another thing I have seen the guards come into the site and charge the people who called the guards into the site".*

The question of when or if it is appropriate for police to decide not to intervene or to wait before intervening in cases involving criminal and anti-social behavior has not been explored within this research. Although from a Travellers' perspective police should intervene sooner rather than later when situations of violence occur. Police responses indicated that in many situations police officers believe that Travellers would prefer to deal with situations involving members of their community without police presence and they further believe that Travellers often perceive police involvement as intrusive.

The perception of some police interviewees that Travellers prefer to deal with their community safety needs independent of a formal policing service was not supported by the research. Travellers reported feeling *under protected* by police.

"There are too many young people involved in drugs and other crimes and people don't take heed of women and kids. It isn't like it used to be – there are young children out late at night unsupervised". [Traveller Respondent]

"They assume the worst of Travellers and expect them to work it out themselves. What is the point in ringing them [police] – in situations of domestic violence you are expected to sort it out yourself". [Traveller Respondent]

Guards are not good at dealing with domestic violence. They come and take the man away from the house – talk to them and then the man will come back home. "The women don't feel supported and that is why they don't trust the guards and go to them. Women say – what's the point". [Traveller Respondent]

Some individuals described experiencing intimidation from other Travellers and therefore felt unsafe within their own community. Nevertheless these individuals also felt vulnerable and mistrustful of police and therefore would not always express their concerns outside of their community for fear of being further victimized by police or other Travellers. Furthermore it was suggested by one Traveller and confirmed by gardai that officers feel at risk entering certain Traveller areas without additional police support, and that other public support services were also concerned for their safety and only entered these areas when accompanied by police.

"If the guards don't feel safe in the area ... then how safe do they think the people that live there feel?"... Who can I turn to when I'm being harassed or intimidated? [Traveller Respondent]

"If I need a visitor like community welfare in my place, she needs to come in with the guards. She just brings the guards ...that is just the way they are...there are no questions that is the way they feel about us". [Traveller Respondent]

Travellers indicated that they sought police support in situations when crimes are committed. The crimes they outlined included feuds, arguments, violence and domestic violence. However it should be noted that male youth indicated that they would find it difficult to contact the gardai under any circumstances. This appears to reinforce the view that male youth are often the most disenfranchised group in a community and the most mistrusting of outside groups (Mulcahy & O'Mahony, 2005).

From a police perspective, gardai expressed frustration that Travellers are not always supportive of their policing efforts. Situations where Travellers were not prepared to make formal statements were used as examples.

> *"Traveller females do not seem willing to report abuse and that is why the police can do very little for them". [Police Respondent]*

> *"Without a complaint the [police] can not get involved in the anti-social behavior that occurs in the community. Most people are not prepared to make a written statement". [Police Respondent]*

It is difficult for police to address criminal and anti-social activities within the Traveller community when they do not receive cooperation from community members. Also, if it is perceived that a fundamental goal of police work is to gain convictions through the courts - then the lack of cooperation from individuals within the community would impact on the success of police to achieve this goal and could potentially influence their work, as police officers may begin to view their efforts as futile.

When exploring the issue of community safety there was a clear division between Travellers and members of An Garda Siochana with an overriding assumption on the part of police that Travellers generally feel safe in the areas they reside. Yet contrary to this view Travellers stated that they do not feel safe where they reside or only feel safe some of the time. In fact only one member from An Garda Siochana shared the view that Travellers might not feel safe where they live *"because of criminals living in their [Traveller] areas"* and they can't *"live among the settled population because they feel exposed".*

From a Traveller perspective some of the safety issues they found most concerning included: feuds and arguments within the community; personal safety when living in a settled area; crimes associated with illegal drugs; groups of unsupervised youth on the streets; and property destruction and robbery. When asked to consider what changes could be made to

address their safety concerns Travellers responded with the following suggestions: A community watch program; finally being accepted in settled areas; the elimination of illegal drugs in the community; Traveller accommodations that provided more space in order to diminish many of the internal conflicts.

Changes to Current Policing Services

The interviewees were asked to suggest changes to the current policing services. Respondents from all groups saw police/community consultation and improved communications between Travellers and police as requiring greater consideration and action. Suggestions included the establishment of initiatives that encourage the building of trust between Travellers and police, in terms of: third-party mediation; full-time positions for ethnic liaison officers; and an improved anti-racism awareness program for gardai. As well, Travellers and police indicated a desire to address the policing problems created by the unresolved issues of Traveller accommodation. How this could be accomplished was not fully discussed but there was a recognition that many of the problems were national in scope and therefore rested with the state. The Traveller community also stressed the importance of police involvement within their community; however this was balanced with their overwhelming concern for the way in which police use their power and authority. Traveller respondents felt that changes should be made to the existing An Garda Siochana organization and suggested the following: a policing system to analyze good practice versus bad practice; the introduction of a new code of professional conduct for gardai; the implementation of changes to the existing garda complaints system; and finally the implementation of new anti-racist policies that are introduced to and followed by all members of An Garda Siochana.

The Perception of Community-Oriented Policing

In order to provide a background for further discussion on community-oriented policing as a viable policing strategy for the Traveller community, respondents from An Garda Siochana and local authority representatives were asked to share their insight and understanding of the subject. They overwhelmingly expressed the view that a community-oriented policing model would benefit Ireland. The findings also indicated that individuals had developed their own understanding of community-oriented policing based on personal experiences and for that reason their understandings of the concept varied. Gardai highlighted the current role of *community liaison officers* (officers that go out and talk to people in the community) and *community forums* (meetings involving community representatives and gardai), however beyond this basic understanding, descriptions not only varied but were often limited in scope. Therefore even though all interviewees embraced community-oriented policing as *"the way of the future"*, it is difficult to determine how informed these opinions were and whether positive perspectives of community-oriented policing were substantially influenced by the political attitudes of the day. This study did not consider what training (in the area of community-oriented policing), if any, have been provided to police interviewees. Nonetheless given the varied responses it appears that training has not been consistent. This may prove troublesome in the future as a general lack of clarity among members of An Garda Siochana could potentially impede the organizations ability to implement and maintain effective community-oriented initiatives. As noted in chapter two there are many ways in which community-oriented policing has been explained, however it would be beneficial for a policing organization to establish one consistent interpretation of community-oriented policing to be understood and followed by all of its members.

Another issue raised by one police respondent focused on how community-oriented policing is viewed within the police force:

> "Community policing is not seen as rewarding as other areas [of policing]. Not like fighting crime. The background work is done with community policing – it is a preventative approach. You don't get ahead in the organization when you do community work". [Police Respondent]

At the same time the same respondent felt that community-oriented policing was beginning to receive positive recognition within An Garda Siochana:

> "However things are changing slowly in the organization and there is more of a belief that community policing is an important part of policing. There is a distinct change in the mission statements over the past several years. Unfortunately money is an issue and when there is a problem community policing is put aside and [community] guards are put on other duties". [Police Respondent]

Unfortunately even though it has been suggested that community-oriented policing has received greater recognition in recent times, it appears that it is still not considered a priority within An Garda Siochana, as the primary focus continues to center on standard reactive not proactive policing, and as previously mentioned could potentially create problems within the police force as it struggles to come to terms with conflicting values and priorities existing within the organization (Thacher, 2001). Therefore before introducing a new community-oriented policing model into an existing police system, it is important that the differing social values and priorities of its members are considered and that when new initiatives are implemented they are recognized and appreciated at all levels of the police force.

The final issue came from one local authority representative who felt that it was important not to create a policing strategy that made the Traveller community "stand out from the rest of society". She felt that this could have negative repercussions for Travellers. She suggested that community-oriented policing programs should include all members of a specific geographic area (i.e. neighborhoods and small village communities) rather than just members of

the Traveller community. From her experience she felt that the majority of Travellers today remain in the same areas and are not as likely to move from place to place in the same manner as they have in the past. For that reason their ties to geographic areas should be strengthened.

In discussion with Traveller interviewees it does appear that many members of the Traveller community view actively traveling as a thing of the past, as *"it isn't as feasible"* in today's modern society. A final draft of the *National Traveller Accommodations Consultative Committee Annual Report* (2004) also supports the notion that a very substantial proposition of Travellers are leading more sedentary lifestyles compared to those who continue to regularly travel throughout the year.

However regardless of the various changes that may have occurred for Travellers in recent years, by only focusing on the *geographic community* important aspects of the *community of interests* are missed. Thus while it can not be denied that geography plays a role in planning community-oriented policing strategies, it is also important to consider the unique interests of minority groups such as the Traveller community. Ensuring that small minority groups have a voice within the context of the entire geographic community is imperative if the unique interests and needs of all groups are to be recognized. In the case of the Traveller community one of the greatest challenges will be to address the concerns of all groups within the larger geographic community while at the same time considering the interests and needs of Travellers that are sedentary or actively traveling.

The Introduction of Community-Oriented Policing Programs

While this study has provided the chance to explore strained relations between Travellers and police, the research process was also the opportunity to examine attitudes towards specific modes of community-oriented policing, providing greater insight into the potential viability of

introducing specific programs into the Traveller community. The following is a summary of responses received from interviewees.

The concept of **police officers visiting schools** was accepted by most individuals interviewed. In fact members from An Garda Siochana highlighted that police currently visit some schools in Ireland and meet with children (ages 10-12 years) to discuss issues such as drug abuse. One member of the police commented that *"they don't go to Traveller schools but would consider it if asked"*. However several concerns were voiced by the Traveller interviewees, which again reinforced feelings of vulnerability. They questioned if the service could be provided in a manner that would not place their children in a position to be ridiculed by their settled peers or manipulated by police.

Holding **policing clinics** away from the police station received a mixed response from all groups. Two police respondents felt that it was not appropriate to take valuable man hours away from regular policing duties in order to hold policing clinics. They surmised that it was more important that police officers were in the community and because of limited resources it would not be considered a priority within the organization. As one officer commented, *"if man hours are spent at a police clinic and no one shows up it is a waste of money"*.

Traveller interviewees were concerned that if a Traveller is seen talking to a police officer they might be labeled a *"squealer"* by certain members of the community and this could have negative repercussions for them in the future. Members from the Traveller community were also concerned that police might use this as an opportunity to manipulate individuals into providing information. Again the issue of police harassment was highlighted by Travellers.

Those in favor of this program indicated that the issues for consideration would include the location of the clinics (citing the importance of a neutral venue), that topics for discussion

should be general in nature and not specific to individual situations and that group participation might be more acceptable versus individual involvement.

Participants from the Traveller community, members of An Garda Siochana and local authorities felt it would be beneficial to have minority groups, including Travellers, working in An Garda Siochana. Many expressed the advantage of having a police force that understood the needs of all communities in Ireland and was more reflective of a growing multicultural society. However most individuals could see barriers when **recruiting Travellers to work in An Garda Siochana** and as one Traveller commented, "*it would be good to have Travellers working in the Garda Siochana – they first need the education and it would be impossible to do at this time*". Another Traveller mirrored the views of others stating that, "*even though some guards are nice it wouldn't work because it would be too rough for the Traveller – the majority of guards wouldn't have it*". From a gardai perspective, one garda member indicated that, "*there are no Travellers [in the police force] and I can't see that happening*".

Training for members of An Garda Siochana in social issues (domestic violence, poverty, cultural diversity, discrimination and anti-racism) was viewed very favorable by all participants. The general consensus was that all levels of the police force should be trained in areas pertaining to social issues and that this training should be continual throughout an individual's career. Several Travellers wanted to see training "*right up to the top*" of the organization, however they also felt that it was important that "*the fellow on the ground gets the training because they are the ones you meet on the street*". It was also considered helpful if the gardai "*actually know the difference in Travellers and realize that there isn't the same idea of family for them*". This statement referred to family groupings and the influence these ties have on the interactions between various members of the Traveller community.

Most interviewees saw an advantage to holding a **national forum** that tackled policing concerns specific to the Traveller community, as they felt that anything that brought people together to talk about Traveller issues would be positive. However some Travellers also indicated that a national forum would be a waste of time because the various parties *"wouldn't listen to each other anyway"*.

Providing individuals with the opportunity to **anonymously report crimes to police** was received positively by most interviewees. Members of the police force indicated that similar programs have been established within An Garda Siochana, but they were unable to speculate if members of the Traveller community would be aware of the existence and purpose of existing programs.

Some Travellers felt that it would be a beneficial program because they could report a crime without being afraid of intimidation or retaliation from other individuals in the community. However from another perspective, Travellers were fearful that there were some individuals in the community that might use the program to *"get even"* with people by providing the police with inaccurate information about illegal activities. It was suggested that gardai should remember that *"an individual is innocent until proven guilty"* and that the police should not assume that everything reported to them is factual.

Educating Travellers on the dangers of drug abuse was seen as a valuable service. However many Travellers felt that police officers should not be providing the service or should work in conjunction with other agencies. They questioned if police officers had the same educational skills that other groups from the community might have.

Members from both the Traveller community and An Garda Siochana had reservations about **police regularly patrolling neighborhoods** for several reasons:

- As mentioned earlier there are some areas that the police do not feel safe patrolling because of previous attacks logged against them.

- Travellers do not always trust police motives; therefore Travellers would be suspicious that the police were seeking out information if they patrolled their neighborhood.

- Nonetheless some Travellers felt it was important to have a strong police presence in their community, providing more public safety to the average resident.

- Apart from the concerns raised in relations to the introduction of regular police patrols, there was also a consistent message from all groups (Travellers, An Garda Siochana and local authorities) that the only way to get to know a community is to connect with it and to find out what the community needs. However how this could be achieved was not articulated.

All individuals interviewed considered the introduction of **local forums** between members of the community, community organizations, gardai from the local police station and local politicians as a worthwhile initiative. A level of skepticism was shared by some individuals feeling that it would only be beneficial if participants were able to create change rather than just talking. Suggestions for the meetings and topics for discussion included:

- Addressing issues of discrimination

- Providing an opportunity for Travellers to begin to make decisions about their lives

- Issues are approached in a fair and equitable way

- Strategies are created to eliminate the domination of gangs

- Creating an environment in which relations could be improved between the various groups

- Address the major problem of Traveller accommodation.

Again the issue of trust was mentioned - with many Traveller interviewees demonstrating reluctance to attend meetings themselves while sharing a feeling that others from the community would be more able and prepared to do so.

Concluding Analysis

This analysis will respond to the two primary research questions raised in this study: What factors impact on the delivery of policing services within the Traveller community and influence relations between Travellers and police? What alternative strategies - given consideration to the future introduction of the *Garda Siochana Bill 2004* – would improve the delivery of policing services to the Traveller community through the development of police/community consultative initiatives? In an effort to fully explore these questions I will first consider how the social values, actions and beliefs of Travellers and police have influenced relations between the two groups. I will then reflect on concerns raised by interviewees that may potentially affect the introduction of community-oriented policing initiatives.

Findings indicate that a conflicting relationship based on mistrust and animosity exists between the Traveller Community and An Garda Siochana. Several factors including differing social values, actions and beliefs of Travellers and police have influenced their interactions.

An Garda Siochana describes the Traveller community as difficult to police because of Travellers' nomadic lifestyle and their lack of openness towards outsiders. To address these issues and fulfill its statutory role in law enforcement An Garda Siochana may have engaged in styles of policing that have created additional animosity between police and Travellers – with Travellers negatively portraying many police actions as harassment and discrimination.

Travellers acknowledge that they are not an open group but justify this with their belief that the majority of Irish society including An Garda Siochana perceive them to be socially inferior and would regularly discriminate against individuals based on their membership in the Traveller community.

Traveller respondents also displayed feelings of vulnerability when interacting with gardai. In response to their feeling of vulnerability, Travellers indicated that they could empower themselves through gaining greater knowledge of Irish law and human rights. They further indicated that this would improve their ability to address issues pertaining to policing in their community.

Incidents of police misconduct were shared freely among Traveller respondents. These claims included situations involving physical mistreatment and verbal abuse. The belief that situations of police misconduct continue to occur has had an intensely negative impact on police/community relations, and from a Traveller perspective has reinforced the view that police can not be trusted and that to engage with police officers places you in a vulnerable position.

Further feelings of vulnerability were shared by many Travellers in relation to the intimidation and arguments that occur within their community and the belief that police are not supportive or protective when threatening or violent situations take place. Of even greater concern is the assertion that some Traveller-specific areas have become locations in which public services will not enter without police presence, and police officers will not patrol these areas without sufficient police support. Given these concerns and the history of relations between Travellers and police, it is understandable that some Travellers feel under-protected by An Garda Siochana and as a result unsafe. For that reason Travellers see public safety issues such as feuds, domestic violence, violence and illegal drugs as key factors influencing their quality of life. In contrast, it has been suggested that police officers focus a great deal of effort on issues such as evictions (from public buildings, housing and illegal encampments), motor vehicle violations, recovering stolen property, and the sale of illegal goods. These findings therefore suggest that although both groups have identified similar policing issues and a desire to improve policing

services within the Traveller community, they are focusing on different areas of concern which appears to illustrate that police and Travellers have differing views of the policing needs for the Traveller community.

The failure of police to intervene during conflicts involving Travellers is also seen by the Traveller community as a fundamental criticism of current policing services, and has led to their belief that Travellers are receiving an inferior service in comparison to the settled community. Many Travellers believe that they are both over-policed and under-protected, and that police focus their energies on controlling or containing the Traveller community rather than supporting it.

According to respondents the presence of illegal drugs has created significant problems within the Traveller community. The sudden rise in the use of illegal drugs appears to have profoundly altered the community's social structure and has introduced a criminal element not present a decade ago. Also, if the perceptions of some Traveller respondents are accurate, certain Traveller areas have become havens for drug trafficking due to limited police presence which further adds to feelings of vulnerability by residents.

The impact of the unresolved issues associated with Traveller accommodations including the existence of impoverished and over-crowded Traveller-specific areas, and police enforcement of the trespass laws and orders related to accommodation concerns should not be minimized - as they are fundamental to improving the quality of life for Travellers and have direct consequences for the way in which policing services are provided to the community.

The conflicting social values held by Travellers and police in relation to the accommodation issue has also had an effect on the way policing services are delivered. The belief by the majority Irish population, including many members of An Garda Siochana, that the

Traveller community should abandon a traditional nomadic way of life and assimilate into mainstream society, as a means of addressing accommodation problems, is seen by Travellers as impinging on their right to maintain their cultural and traditional way of life. Promoting assimilation not only asks Travellers to abandon a nomadic lifestyle but also threatens their social values and beliefs which in turn strike at the very core of their group identity.

Even though An Garda Siochana interviewees stated that they had a positive perception of the Traveller community, some gardai still felt that many of the problems that exist for Travellers are due to their lack of conformity with the rest of society. This indicates a level of intolerance for the cultural and traditional values of this unique group of Irish people. If individuals working with minority groups do not have a fundamental understanding of multiculturalism and a willingness to embrace cultural diversity including the differing traditions and beliefs found within ethnic groups, they run the risk of implementing services that are in direct conflict with the values and needs identified by the community.

Several points relating to the development of community-oriented policing programs featured in the findings. It is important to note that respondents from all groups supported the introduction of comprehensive training throughout the police organization in areas specific to social issues such as domestic violence, poverty, discrimination, cultural diversity and anti-racism, as well as the recruitment of more Travellers into An Garda Siochana. Unfortunately Travellers clearly demonstrated that they were uncomfortable involving themselves in programs that place them in direct contact with police officers. Their mistrust of police motives appears to often super cede their interest in engaging in programs that encourage individual face-to-face interactions with police. This will create difficulties for the Traveller community if it wishes to

have its voice heard within the milieu of the consultative process proposed within the *Garda Siochana Bill 2004.*

A final point considers the potential introduction of national and local consultative processes into a community-oriented policing strategy. Presently the community/police consultative initiatives found in chapter four of the *Garda Siochana Bill 2004* focus specifically on providing communities with the opportunity to share their views on local policing issues through committees established at a local level, in which local authorities play a primary role. These committees are established based on geographic areas alone and may not benefit small marginalized groups living within the larger community; as the focus may not be on the interests of smaller groups but the overriding views of the majority population. Furthermore not only is the Traveller community small in numbers, its members are located across the country. Consequently Travellers will not collectively have their voices heard if local committees are the only mechanism in which they have the opportunity to express their views on policing issues. It is therefore worth considering the viability of creating a national level consultative process to work in conjunction with local groups to address policing needs for the entire Traveller community in Ireland.

CHAPTER FIVE
Recommendations and Conclusion

Recommendations

Based on this research study my recommendations and conclusion are as follows.

- It is clear that Travellers find it difficult to engage in programs involving police. Nevertheless if police and Travellers hope to begin improving their relationship to one that is based on understanding and acceptance it is imperative that they learn more about each other. A potential first step in improving relations between the two groups would be the creation of development sessions. These sessions could include lectures, panel discussions, working groups or participatory events that highlight the awareness of specific aspects of both groups. Keeping in mind the high level of illiteracy within the Traveller community. It is also important that all potential participants have accessibility to these sessions and that recognition must be given to the fact that both groups come from differing cultural understandings and therefore any development sessions must account for this diversity. Traveller organizations continue to play a primary role in community development and therefore should take a key position in the establishment of development sessions based on the identified needs of the participants.

- Travellers clearly indicated a desire to increase their knowledge in the areas of human rights, the law and policing in Ireland. I therefore recommend that Travellers across the country are provided with access to the information they desire in these areas. It is hoped that through

gaining knowledge Travellers will feel less vulnerable and more empowered to address policing issues in the future.

- Traveller accommodation remains a controversial issue in Ireland. The current approaches embarked on by various local authorities have not achieved the level of success anticipated in the *Report of the Task Force for the Travelling People 1995*. This has had far reaching implications for the quality of life for Travellers today and, as emphasized throughout these research findings, has also had a direct impact on the policing needs of the Traveller community. I therefore recommend that efforts be made on a national level to finally address this issue in a consistent, coordinated and inclusive manner, and that the support of key stakeholders including all levels of government and members of the Traveller community be solicited in an effort to find a resolution that is acceptable to all participants. I further recommend that time and energy be taken to identify and acknowledge the conflicting needs and values of the various stakeholders, given that there appears to be a clear division between the desire to assimilate Travellers into mainstream society and Travellers' need to maintain their individual group identity through following their traditional heritage, including their nomadic way of life.

- Following the *Garda Siochana Bill 2004*, I recommend that An Garda Siochana examine its current commitment towards building stronger police/community relations. This should include ensuring that all current strategies are supportive of a community-oriented policing approach. Also it is important for An Garda Siochana to develop an understanding of how differing values and priorities held by the organization (including those of its members) and the Traveller community affects existing relations and will potentially impact on their future ability to work together in partnership.

- I further recommend that An Garda Siochana ensure consistent training in community-oriented policing is introduced immediately throughout the organization - as well as extensive training in human rights, social issues, cultural diversity and anti-racism. This is imperative if the organization is going to be able to effectively embrace the various needs of the diverse, multicultural Irish society of today. However it must also be acknowledged that training alone is not enough to address issues such as discrimination and racism, and for that reason it is imperative that additional strategies to address these issues are also sought out and implemented within the organization.

- The new *Garda Siochana Bill 2004* approaches the police/community consultative process based on the geographic community, more specifically local authority areas. This will not fully address the interests of groups such as Travellers. I therefore recommend that consideration be given for the establishment of a separate national level consultative mechanism that will focus specifically on policing issues for Travellers and will maintain direct links with all local authority areas. It is hoped that this will ensure that Travellers will have the opportunity to actively participate with other stakeholders in the development of policing services for the Traveller community.

The recommendations presented above offer a starting point on which to begin to address the complex factors that have contributed to the negative environment in which policing services are currently provided to the Traveller community.

Conclusion

Through the use of participatory research methods this study has examined factors that influence the conflicting relationship between police and Travellers, as well as considering how

these factors impact on existing policing services and could potentially create barriers for the future development of community-oriented policing strategies. Some of the issues identified through the research process include: the challenges in policing a community that for whatever reason is not openly supportive of police actions; the Traveller community's view that it is over-policed and under-protected and that police focus on controlling or containing rather than supporting; concerns over the misconduct of police officers; Travellers' belief that they are considered by the majority settled population including police as socially inferior and are therefore discriminated against; and finally, conflicts created within the Traveller community and between police and Travellers because of the accommodation issue. Options for over coming the barriers created by these issues in the context of the current environment have been suggested, however it must be recognized that if change is to be sustainable in the future it will require a long term commitment on the part of both groups. It should also be recognized that groups will continue to evolve in response to their internal and external environments, and therefore even if past and present issues are addressed new issues will inevitably continue to arise. It is for that reason that a permanent structure through a community-oriented policing approach should be established to ensure that a positive consultative process can be sustained.

Currently Traveller organizations provide a strong link between the Traveller community and outside groups such as An Garda Siochana. Pavee Point for example continues to promote improved relations between police and Travellers and has made efforts to address ongoing issues arising from the current policing services provided to the Traveller community. Pavee Point has been particularly successful in its attempts to bring Travellers and police together in a venue that has made Travellers feel more confident in meeting with police. It will be important in the future that successes such as these are built upon by Traveller organizations in a coordinated, inclusive

manner to ensure the policing needs of Travellers across the country are dealt with and that the entire Traveller community is facilitated in developing a strong voice in all consultative processes including those proposed under the new *Garda Siochana Bill.*

In conclusion it must be noted that Travellers have experienced a long history of discrimination, racism and social marginalization in Ireland and this has been exemplified in their feelings of vulnerability and mistrust towards the majority settled Irish population including An Garda Siochana. It is for that reason that Travellers have become a more closed and guarded group and why they are hesitant to engage with outsiders, even though this has often been to their detriment. The complexities of addressing problems such as discrimination, racism and social marginalization exist well beyond the realm of police/community relations and must also be considered within the greater social context. Unfortunately the challenges faced by the Traveller community in Ireland have received limited interest in academic studies, and without further research in all areas that impinge on the quality of life for the Traveller community, the importance of this issue may continue to be ignored.

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Appendix 1: The British House of Lords in "Mandla v. Dowell Lee" (1983)

Appendix 2: Information Sheet

INFORMATION SHEET
Research Project

Supporting Community-Oriented Policing within the Traveller Community

Researcher: Colleen Ellis
University Affiliation: Royal Roads University, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
Faculty Supervisor:
Sponsor:

Purpose: The purpose of this research project is to assist Pavee Point in the development of a proposed community-oriented policing model for the Traveller Community.

How will the research be done?

- Information will be gathered through focus groups and individual interviews with Travellers, members of the Garda Siochana and Local Authorities. Each group will be seen separately (for example: participants from the Travellers will participate in focus groups that will not include members from the Garda Siochana and Local Authorities).

- The questions asked by the researcher will focus on policing within the Traveller community.

What is expected of the participants?

- Each participant is expected to attend a focus group and/or an individual interview. These will require approximately two hours of the participants time. The researcher will ask specific questions and the participants will be expected to share their opinions.

- All participants will be invited to attend a follow up meeting giving them feedback on the final results of the research.

What will happen to the information collected?

- The information (data) collected will remain with the researcher. All data collected will remain confidential and it will only be seen by the researcher.

- The participants' names will not appear on any documentation.

- Information collected from participants will not include names and individuals will only be identified by numbers.

- The researcher will analyze the data. Then in consultation with Pavee Point, the researcher will propose strategies that will be used to develop the new community-oriented policing model.

- The views and advice of a review committee will also be sought before the research findings and recommendations are finalized. The review committee will be made up of representatives from the Traveller community, the Garda Siochana and local authorities.

- Within twelve months after the data has been collected it will be destroyed.

What happens if someone decides not to participate?

- A participant may withdraw at any time.

What happens to the research project when it is completed?

- Pavee Point will have the opportunity to use the results of the project to continue working towards the establishment of a new community-oriented policing model for the Traveller community.

- The project will be submitted by the researcher as a graduate thesis to Royal Roads University and will be publicly accessible on the internet. If accepted, it will be published.

How do individuals consent (agree) to participate in the research project?

- If an individual (adult) attends a focus group or an individual interview and responds to the questions asked by the researcher, it will be assumed that they have consented/agreed to participate in the project.

- However, it is necessary for youth under the age of 18 years to have a form signed by their parent or guardian before participating in the research.

If you have any further questions please contact the Mediation Team at Pavee Point.

Thank you for your support!

Appendix 3: Consent Forms

Consent Form for Youth Under 18 Years

I am the parent or guardian of _____. I have read and understand the information provided on the Research Project entitled, *Supporting Community-Oriented Policing within the Traveller Community.* I agree that _____ may participate in an individual interview or as a member of a focus group.

Parent Signature: _____

Youth Signature: _____

Thank You for Your Support!

Consent Form

I have read and understand the information provided on the Research Project entitled, *Supporting Community-Oriented Policing within the Traveller Community,* and I agree to participate in an individual interview and/or as a member of a focus group.

Signature: _____

Thank You for your Support!

Appendix 4: Questions for the Traveller Community

Questions for the Traveller Community

(Note: these questions are intended to guide the interviews and it is hoped that individuals will take the opportunity to expand on the questions by providing narrative examples)

Describe what you know about An Garda Siochana as a policing organization.

What purpose does it serve? What is its job/role?

Would it be helpful to receive more information about An Garda Siochana (i.e. the role of the ethnic liaison officer, the youth liaison officer)?

Would you like to know what An Garda Siochana can do for you and the Traveller community?

Would it be beneficial to have a police officer visit schools to give talks to the community to familiarize children and adults with the role of police?
How would you see this happening?

One way other communities have been able to have their questions answered and to pass information to interested people has been to hold policing clinics on a regular basis in a neutral location such as a community centre, where people drop in to meet police officers without having to go to the police station. Would you be interested in having local clinics with the gardai outside of a Garda Station?

What area are you currently living in (i.e. Finglas, Coolock etc.)?
How long have you lived there?

What type of accommodation do you live in (halting site, group housing scheme, standard local authority housing, privately owned house, etc.)?

Do you think that living nomadic or sedentary, (moving or staying in one place for a long period of time) lifestyle has affected your relationship with the police? Please explain?

How would you describe your relationship with the police?
Would you feel comfortable talking to them?
Would you like to know more about An Garda Siochana (i.e. the community guards, juvenile liaison officers and ethnic liaison officers are in your area)?
Would you like to be introduced to them? How?

What is your general opinion of An Garda Siochana and the service it provides to Travellers?
Has your opinion changed in the past 10 years? If yes, why has it changed?
Do you think that your opinion is shared by most Travellers? Why?

Would you like to see the Traveller Community having more of a say about the policing service they receive? How would you like to see that occurring?

How frequently (often) do Travellers and police come into contact with each other?

For what kinds of reasons do Travellers and police come into contact?

What is negative about the contact between Travellers and police? How could negative types of contact/situations be handled better by police and by Travellers?

What has been positive about contact between Traveller and police?

Overall how would you describe the relations between police and the Travellers?

Would you say that relations have changed over the past 10 years?

If yes, then how have relations changed?

Would this be the same in the towns as in the country? Explain.

Would this be the same for different groups of Travellers (i.e. men, women and youth)?

Would it be the same for Travellers living in different types of accommodations?

Would you like to see Travellers working in An Garda Siochana?

In your opinion would the police and Traveller community benefit from altering how they currently relate to each other? Why?

If yes, what changes need to take place to improve relations?

Who would need to be involved in order to ensure the changes happens?

Does involvement with local authorities influence relations between police and Travellers? If so how?

Describe situations when Travellers would need the services of police.

When would you seek assistance from the police?

Do you think that the settled community has the same policing needs as the Traveller community? Explain?

In your opinion are all groups within the settled population treated the same by police? Why?

Are all Travellers treated in the same way by police? Explain.

Would the Travellers receive the same treatment by the police as the settled population? Explain?

When conflicts takes place between the settled community and Travellers would you say that the needs of the Travellers are recognized by the police? Explain.

Would you like to have on going training for all members of An Garda Siochana in social issues such as domestic violence, poverty, anti-racism and discrimination and cultural diversity (difference)? Why would this be a benefit? What level within the police organization needs training?

How would you feel about the creation of a national level forum (group/committee) brought together to deal with policing concerns specific to the Traveller community?

What concerns you the most about the area in which you live in (i.e. crime or anti-social activities)?

What could the police do to address your concerns?

In your opinion do other residents (Travellers and others) in your area feel the same way?
In your opinion would the majority of the Traveller community share your concerns?
Would there be other concerns shared by the majority of the Traveller community?

Do you think that the community would benefit from the use of a service that provided individuals with the ability to anonymously report crime (i.e. you don't have to give your name when you report)?

Do you think that it would be beneficial for police officers to provide Travellers with education on the dangers of drug abuse?

Do you feel safe where you are currently living? Can you explain why?
If you don't feel safe, in your opinion what needs to change?

One community policing program has the police regularly patrolling neighborhoods. How do you feel about that as an option?

Would you support regular meetings between members of the Traveller community (from the local area), community organizations, members from the local Garda Siochana and local authority representatives? The purpose of the meetings would be to build partnerships and address problems related to quality of life issues for Travellers in the area.
What would you like to see being discussed at these meetings?
Would you personally be prepared to take part in these types of meetings?
Do you think there are other Travellers who would be prepared to take part in these types of meetings?

List the goals (improvements) you would like to see happen if changes are made to the current policing strategies (practices) (i.e. improved relations between Travellers and the police, a more sensitive approach to particular problems such as the policing of Traveller funerals).
What would have to happen if these goals (improvements) are to be achieved (become reality)?
Do you think that Travellers and An Garda Siochana are able to complete these goals (improvements)?
Are there other groups that might help or hinder Travellers and An Garda Siochana from reaching these goals (improvements)?
Are there problems that would make your suggestions for difficult to achieve/ make a reality?
In your opinion how could these difficulties be over come/ sorted out?
In your opinion how would the wider Traveller community and An Garda Siochana as an organization respond to the goals/improvements you have suggested?

Appendix 5: Questions for An Garda Siochana

Questions for An Garda Siochana

(Note: these questions are intended to guide the interviews and it is hoped that individuals will take the opportunity to expand on the questions by providing narrative examples)

How would you describe community-oriented policing? Can you provide examples?
What model of policing is currently used within Ireland?
Do you feel that An Garda Siochana as an organization embraces the community-oriented model of policing? Can you explain?
What is your opinion of community-oriented policing?
What would you see as the positive/negative aspects of following a community-oriented model of policing?

Do you think it would be helpful for the Traveller community to learn more about An Garda Siochana (i.e. about the role of the ethnic liaison officer, the youth liaison officer, community guards)?
How could this be achieved?

Do you think it would be beneficial to have a police officer visit schools to give talks to the community in order to familiarize children and adults with the role of the police? How would you see this happening?

One community oriented policing strategy has been to hold policing clinics on a regular basis in a neutral location. Would that be something you would be willing to consider? Why?

How would you describe your relationship with the Traveller community?
Would you know many Travellers by name?
Do you feel comfortable talking to them?
Would you like to learn more about the Travellers living in your area?
Would you like to be introduced to Travellers in your area? How?

What area are you currently working in?
How long have you worked there?

How would you describe the Traveller community?
Has your opinion changed in the past 10 years? If yes, how and why has it changed?
Do you think your opinion is shared by most police officers? Why?

Would you be open to the Traveller community having more input into the policing services they receive?
How would you see that working?

For what reasons do Travellers and police come into contact?
Overall how would you describe the relations between the police and the Traveller community?
Would you say that relations have changed over the past 10 years?
If yes, then how and why have relations changed?
Would this be the same in the towns as in the country? Explain.

Would this be the same for different groups of Travellers (i.e. men, women and youth)?
Would this be the same for Travellers living in different types of accommodations?

Would you like to see Travellers working in An Garda Siochana?

In your opinion would police and the Traveller community benefit from altering how they currently relate to each other? Why?
What could be changed to improve relations between the two parties?
Who would need to be involved in order to ensure the changes happen?

Do you think that local authorities influence relations between police and Travellers? If so how?

Describe situations when Travellers would seek out the assistance of the police.
Do you think that the settled community has the same policing needs as the Traveller community? Explain?
In your opinion do all groups within the settled population have the same policing needs? Why?
Do all Travellers have the same policing needs (i.e. within various accommodations, men, women and youth)? Explain?

Do you see a benefit in having on going training for all members of An Garda Siochana in social issues such as domestic violence, poverty, anti-racism, discrimination and cultural diversity?
Why would this be beneficial?
What levels within the Garda organization require training?

How would you feel about the creation of a national level forum brought together to deal with policing concerns specific to the Traveller community?

What concerns you the most about the community in which you work?
What could police do to address these concerns?
In your opinion do other police officers share your views?
In your opinion would residents in the area also share these views?
In your opinion would the wider Traveller community have the same concerns?

Do you think that the community would benefit from individuals being provided with the ability to anonymously report crime?

Do you think that it would be beneficial for police officers to provide Travellers with education on the dangers of drug abuse? Why?

Do the majority of Travellers currently feel safe in their community? Explain?
Could changes be made to ensure that the majority of Travellers feel safe? What would those changes be?

Would you be in favor of police regularly patrolling neighborhoods?

Would you support regular meetings between members of the Traveller community (from the local area), community organizations, members from the local An Garda Siochana and local authority representatives? The purpose of the meetings would be to build partnerships and address problems related to quality of life issues for the Travellers in the area.

What would you like to see being discussed at these meetings?
Would you personally be prepared to take part in these types of meetings?
Do you think other members of An Garda Siochana would be prepared to take part in these types of meetings?

List the goals you would like to see happen if changes are made to the current policing strategies.
 What would have to happen if these goals are to be achieved?
Do you think that the Travellers/Garda Siochana is able to complete these goals?
Are there other groups that might help or hinder the Travellers/Garda Siochana from reaching these goals?
Are there challenges that would make your suggestions for change difficult to achieve?
In your opinion how could these difficulties be over come?
In your opinion how would the wider Traveller/Garda Siochana as an organization respond to the goals you have suggested?

Appendix 6: Questions for Local Authorities

Questions for Local Authorities

(Note: these questions are intended to guide the interviews and it is hoped that individuals will take the opportunity to expand on the questions by providing narrative examples)

In your own words can you describe community-oriented policing?
What is your opinion of community-oriented policing?

Do local authorities have a role in community-oriented policing in Ireland? If so what should it be?

What do you think might be some of the problems of implementing a community-oriented policing model in your area?

What do you think might be some of the problems of implementing a community-oriented policing model for within the Traveller community?

What types of accommodations are available to Travellers in your area?

How would you describe relations between the Travellers community and An Garda Siochana?
How would you describe the relations between Travellers and local authorities?
How would you describe the relations between police and local authorities?

How does your local authority influence relations between police and Travellers?

In your opinion when would Travellers seek the services of An Garda Siochana?

In your opinion would the settled population in your area have the same policing needs as Travellers? What would be the similarities and differences?

In your opinion are all groups within the settled population treated the same by police?

Would the Travellers receive the same treatment by police as the settled population?

When conflicts take place between the settled community and Travellers would you say that the needs of Travellers are recognized by police?

What are your views on the creation of a national level forum brought together to deal with policing concerns specific to the Traveller community?

Would you support regular meetings between members of the Traveller community, community organizations, and members from the local Garda Siochana and local authority representatives? The purpose of the meetings would be to build partnerships and address problems related to quality of life issues for Travellers in the area.

What do you feel are of greatest concern to the Traveller community in your area?

What could the police do to address these concerns?

In your opinion do other individuals within your local authority feel the same way?

Do the majority of Travellers in your area feel safe where they are living?

List the goals you would like to see happen if changes are made to the current policing strategies?
What would have to happen if these goals are to be achieved?
Do you think that Travellers and police are able to fulfill these goals?
Are there problems that would make your suggestions difficult to achieve?
Are there other groups that might help or hinder these goals from being achieved?
In your opinion how could these difficulties be over come?
In your opinion how would the wider Traveller community and An Garda Siochana as an organization respond to the goals you have suggested?