

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> University of Lincoln		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 18 - Law		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Improving Police Policy and Practice through Evidence-based Decision-making		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2014 onwards		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>  HALL Matthew	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>  Professor of Law and Criminal Justice	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>  1 Aug 14 – 31 Dec 20
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014 - 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words) In the last 20 years, improving support for the victims of crime has become central to national criminal justice policy. Through the application of his research on the victims of crime and their support by criminal justice agencies, Professor Hall has had substantial and lasting impacts on police operational practice in Lincolnshire and the wider region, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in police policy and practice relating to ethical issues;</li> <li>• Enabling evidence-based decision making by Lincolnshire's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC); and,</li> <li>• Improving the integrity of crime reporting.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words) Hall has been actively researching criminal justice, victimisation and police policy for over 15 years, producing a body of work recognised internationally for shaping our understanding of victims' experiences of criminal justice. In recognition of his contribution to the field of criminology, Hall received the bi-annual Denis Szabo Award from the Centre International Criminologie Comparée, Université de Montréal (<a href="https://bit.ly/3c7BpEm">https://bit.ly/3c7BpEm</a>). Hall's research, conducted at Lincoln (3.1-3.5), has drawn upon a variety of empirical approaches and ethical positions, notably virtue and common good approaches to justice, with significant implications for how victims of crime experience justice as a concept within the criminal justice system (3.1, 3.2). Three aspects of his research have been critical to informing impact during the REF period. First, Hall has provided a conceptual and empirically tested account of how victim support needs should be considered in the criminal justice system. Second, he has shown how procedural safeguards can protect victims. Third, in combining these conceptual and procedural insights, he exposed gaps and opportunities for improvement in the practical delivery of victim support services.</p> <p><i>(i) Understanding victim support needs</i> Hall has conducted extensive research into understanding the political, social and cultural contexts of victimisation and victim policy (3.1). He has demonstrated how political, social and cultural factors interact with criminal justice policy, providing key insights for policy makers and practitioners as to how policy ideas translate into practice within the criminal justice system (3.1). There is a body of literature adopting a victim-centric approach that provides insights from 'cultural victimology', 'victim governance', and 'victim in law/criminal justice, this mainly takes discrete sociological (e.g. Rock 2004), political (Garland 2001) or legal (Ashworth 2000) perspectives. Hall's research (3.1) combines these approaches to explain their implications for the policy of victim support, and to do so from a socio-legal perspective that examines the end-to-end process of victim policy from development to implementation. He uses real cases studies on the provision of victim support by police forces to test and explain the conceptual findings.</p>		

Hall combines different strands of research to establish how public policy on victim support has increasingly devolved responsibility for victim support away from the state to immediate family and local support groups, and that in line with neo-liberal values, some responsibility for the burden of supporting victims has been placed onto offenders (3.1, chap 2). This increases the vulnerability of victims, leaving them less able to cope with crime and recover from harm (3.3). Hall gathered data on how PCCs have commissioned victim support services and evaluated the way PCCs have assessed victim needs. This leads Hall to conclude that criminal justice agencies need to consider more carefully how they interact with victims of crime to ensure that they meet victims' actual support needs. This draws upon wider sociological insights about the nature of victimisation rather than limited perspectives such as social standing or 'labelling' of victims. By understanding the pivotal role that local criminal justice agencies (e.g. PCCs) play in the provision and delivery of victim support services, and their responsibility for and power over victims, Hall shows that providers can make more considered decisions on the provision of services in light an awareness of the wider cultural and political situation of victims (3.1 chaps 3 and 7). Expanding on a deeper understanding of the nature of the victim, Hall has foregrounded less 'visible' victims and their interaction with criminal justice agencies, including older-age victims of crime (3.2) and a wide body of work on victims of environmental harm (e.g. 3.5), making recommendations on support needs of a wider range of different types of victim of crime.

(ii) *Procedural safeguards*

Building on this earlier work, Hall has recently focused attention on victim interactions with police (3.4) and courts at both a national and international level (3.1) establishing victims' basic needs/desires from such agencies as being threefold: procedural justice, respect, and support. This specifically included understanding the impacts of compensation, restitution and restorative justice mechanisms as modes of redressing the victims of crime (3.1 chap 5). Specifically, Hall advanced the importance of securing these processes in policy and practice as a means of improving the confidence and capacity of victims to engage with criminal justice proceedings. This research dovetails with Hall's other research on data gap analysis in crime reporting (3.6). Although focused on environmental crime, his approach shows that effective and tailored crime policy response measures cannot be developed in the absence of robust data recording and sharing.

(iii) *Capacity-building for Victim Support*

Hall has also focused attention on the provision of victim services through the UK government's new local commissioning scheme, whereby the role of distributing government monies for victim support has been delegated to local police and crime commissioners. Hall produced one of the first detailed studies into the first round of PCCs' commissioning of these services (3.3) and the interaction between such services and victims' wider experiences with the rest of the criminal justice process (3.1). This revealed shortcomings in the existing system from a victim perspective and, notably, an absence of provision and support for victims of domestic abuse. Hall also recommended the use of more robust data collection measures on victims and victimisation in local areas in order to properly target the funding to meet local victims' needs (3.1).

**3. References to the research** (indicative maximum of six references)

- 3.1 M Hall, *Victims of crime: constructions, governance and policy* (Palgrave 2017).  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64589-6>
- 3.2 M Hall, 'Older people, victims and crime' in P Davies et al (eds) *Victims crime and society: an introduction* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Sage 2017) 167-183.  
Available on request.
- 3.3 M Hall, 'Supporting victims of crime in England and Wales: local commissioning meeting local needs?' (2018) *24 International Review of Victimology* 219-237.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0269758017747055>

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- 3.4 M Hall, 'Victims of crime: culture, politics and criminal process in the twenty-first century' (2017) *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* 469-90. Available on request.
- 3.5 M Hall, 'Victims of environmental crime: Routes for recognition, restitution and redress' in T Spapens, R White and R Kluin (eds), *Environmental crime and its victims: Perspectives within green criminology* (Routledge, 2014) 103-118. Available on request.
- 3.6 M Hall and T Wyatt, *Tackling environmental crime in Europe. A LIFE-ENPE Capitalisation and Gap-filling Report* (2017).  
[https://www.environmentalprosecutors.eu/sites/default/files/document/Cap%20and%20Gap%20report\\_FINAL\\_Print.pdf](https://www.environmentalprosecutors.eu/sites/default/files/document/Cap%20and%20Gap%20report_FINAL_Print.pdf)

#### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The University of Lincoln has developed close working relationships with key policing bodies which enabled research-driven improvements in police behaviours in supporting victims of crime and more broadly in driving evidence-based decision-making within the police and the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCCs) Office. As a result of his internationally recognised expertise on the impact of crime on victims, Hall has been invited to participate in a number of police led initiatives designed to improve victim services through evidence informed policy change. Since 2014, Hall has been Lincoln University's lead on the East Midlands Police Academic Collaboration (EMPAC), a cooperative network between five police forces (Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire; comprising 8,239 officers and staff), respective PCCs and University researchers. In October 2015, Hall was invited onto Lincolnshire Police's Ethics Panel. EMPAC guides policy development matters that the police consider to be ethically contentious. Opportunities to influence policy have been reinforced through regular engagement with and expert briefings to the PCCs in Lincolnshire and the East Midlands. Through these collaborations Hall's research has had the following impacts:

##### (i) *Changes in police policy and practice relating to ethical issues*

Lincolnshire Police force have changed their approach to victim support in response to insights and advice drawn from Hall's research. Between 2015 and 2020, Hall utilised his research on the nature of victimisation (3.1) and procedural good practice (3.4) to inform and influence the deliberations and outcomes of all discussions conducted by Lincolnshire Police's Ethics Panel. This resulted in the development of more ethically informed and evidence-based approaches by Lincolnshire Police that was sensitive to victim needs and perceptions of bias or unfairness in the conduct of crime investigations. The Independent Chair of the Lincolnshire Police Ethics Panel confirms that Hall has made a '*very substantial*' difference to how the Panel operates, using his practice orientated research to make the Panel proceedings '*far more relevant to society in general.*' (5.1) For example, Hall's work on procedural justice (3.4) was utilised in a debate around the force's response to 'concerns' around the prevalence of Freemasonry within the police. This flagged up the risks arising from a lack of transparency (real or perceived) and concerns by the police about how this might be seen to undermine a commitment of police to act towards victims with integrity ('honest, openness and fairness') under the Lincolnshire Police Code of Ethics (5.2). As a result of Hall's research, the Assistant Chief Constable of Lincolnshire Police initiated a new practice under the Code of Ethics encouraging Freemasons to be open about their membership and for other officers to be less distrustful.

Hall also advised the Panel on their response to questions which had arisen within the force around romantic and sexual relationships between officers, leading to reform of force policy on the disclosure (or not) of such relationships. In particular, this was informed by Hall's research on power inequalities within relationships and their potential to create situations of domestic abuse. This means considering a wider category of potential victims and putting in place procedural safeguards (3.2; 3.4). Further, Hall also conducted training sessions, based on his own work into ethical approaches to criminal justice (3.1), with officers on the Panel to help them apply various ethical approaches in their deliberations. Following Hall's presentation of his

research to the Panel on ‘the needs of victims in practice rather than just in theory’ (drawn from 3.1), and Hall’s questioning of the narrow approach to labelling the victims of crime, the Panel reflected on how victims were being identified and perceived under their current practices. Hall specifically flagged the issue of ‘hidden victims’ (see 3.3) and alerted the Panel and the PCC to the need to ensure that it is more inclusive in identifying and supporting victims including male victims of domestic abuse. Upon the Panel’s recommendation, Lincolnshire Police decided instead to embrace a broader notion of domestic violence which specifically distanced itself from more gendered notions of the issue. On the basis of Hall’s input, Lincolnshire Police decided to reframe the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme to accommodate both male and female victims, as opposed to only female victims (5.3) and instituted a programme intended to support male victims of domestic abuse. This has then led to important practical changes in the support for male domestic abuse victims. Overall, there has been an increase in the availability of victim support services in the region, which benefitted from an additional funding of £380,000 secured by the PCC and local support groups from the Home office to support the initiative (5.4). This initiative includes new training sessions for professionals handling incidents of male domestic abuse; online training for police officers; and a new campaign to encourage male victims to come forward (5.4).

(ii) *Shaping Victim Support Policy and Practice*

As part of his research into the commissioning of victim services (3.1; 3.3; 3.4), Hall interviewed the Lincolnshire PCC in 2015. Recognising his expertise, in 2017 Hall was invited to join the Lincolnshire Victims Commissioning Group (LVCG), a panel constituted by the PCC to advise him on this commissioning role. In 2017, the University of Lincoln organised a one-day conference to which the PCC and all local victim service providers were invited. Hall presented his findings as to the functioning of the system (based on 3.3). This led to the introduction of a new model of victim support services that has since improved the quality of victim support (5.5, p 8), with the Lincolnshire PCC testifying that ‘*the knowledge Matthew has provided within the groups has been invaluable to the development of a new model of victim services for Lincolnshire*’ (5.6). As a member of the LVCG, Hall regularly drew upon his research to inform high-level policy discussions on the impact and support needs of crime victims (3.1; 3.2; 3.3) with the Commissioning Group. He drew attention to the need to tailor services to specific victim needs (3.1, chap 4) and canvassed the benefits of restorative justice (3.1, chapter 5). He also advised them on allocation and funding matters in light of other commissioning practice (3.1 chap 3). Specifically, the funding and support model now supports five new services: Victim Outreach Service for all victims; support for victims of sexual assault, including a Sexual Assault Referral Centre and a Children and Young People’s Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (CHISVA); Restorative Justice services; Victim Information Portal; and the appointment of a Victim Services Delivery Manager (Details on services is shown in 5.5, p 8). These changes were introduced within existing budgets that were fixed at £965,000/annum since 2017-18 in a period of fiscal constraint. The new victim support model is now part of the wider ‘Putting Victims First’ strategy adopted by Lincolnshire Police in 2018. This helped the Lincolnshire Police meet its commitments under the Victim Services Commissioning Framework to provide more effective services which meet local needs and achieve genuine outcomes for victims.

In February 2020, Hall chaired a national conference in London organized on behalf of the Ministry of Justice to feed into a revision of the government’s Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, of which victim service commissioning is a key part. At this session, Hall shared best practices on commissioning service (3.1, chap 5, and 3.3) as well as recent experiences drawn from his work with Lincolnshire Police. The event was heavily representative of PCCs (18 attended) and victim service providers (6 national and 11 regional organisations) who were subject to PCC commissioning schemes. Hall showcased his research (3.3, 3.4, 3.5), explaining how this was informing regional policing policy, and enabling the PCC to commission more responsive victim support services in Lincolnshire. Hall also facilitated the main event of the day, which was a consultation exercise on behalf of the Ministry of Justice to effect changes to the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (5.7).

(iii) *Improving quality and enabling evidence-based decision making by Lincolnshire’s PCC*

In 2018, Hall became a member of the Lincolnshire Police Crime Recording Confidence Panel (CRCP) (5.8). This Panel was initiated in 2018 in response to an Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection that found that the force's crime recording arrangements were 'Inadequate'. The arrangements had serious shortcomings, including an estimated 9400 crimes (19%) not reported each year. A particular concern was violent crimes, rape, and crimes involving vulnerable victims (27% unreported; 9% of rapes were not reported). 17% of rapes had not been recorded within 24 hours, delaying access to referrals to victim support services. Almost 20% of audited rapes were not accurately reported (5.9). Only 7 of 28 vulnerable victim crimes were recorded. HMICFRS demanded improvements in rigour and timeliness of reporting.

The CRCP was charged by the PCC with formulating and delivering policy and practical measures that would address the shortcoming identified by HMICFRS. The CRCP made 8 key recommendations. Hall's experience of measuring and evaluating crime data (3.6) shaped these measures, with two individual recommendations drawing upon Hall's specific research concerning best practices in the commissioning of victim support services by PCCs (3.1; 3.3): First, that the Police and PCC should 'develop and maintain strong links with victim support and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector charities with particular emphasis on vulnerability' (5.8, Recommendation 6). Second, that through any communications policy, victims should not be discouraged from seeking assistance and support (5.8, Recommendation 7), reflecting Hall's research insights on the need to ensure that 'hidden victims' are not omitted from the provision of support services (3.2 and 3.4).

A HMICFRS reinspection in 2019 found these policy changes to have resulted in significant improvements to crime reporting practices (5.10). The reporting of violent crime improved by 14.6% (equivalent to an additional 3420 crimes). The level of audited rape cases dropped to less than 1% (i.e. 1 of 105 cases). Only 1.4% or reported sex offences were unrecorded, and one of the highest rates in the country. 22 of 23 vulnerable victim crimes were reported. These improvements can be directly attributed to the Panel policy interventions, as grounded by Hall's research.

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- 5.1 Letter from Chair of Lincolnshire Police Ethics Committee.
- 5.2 [Lincolnshire Police Code of Ethics](#)
- 5.3 [Lincolnshire Police, Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#)
- 5.4 PCC Notice: 'PCC helps secure extra funding to support male victims of domestic abuse'.
- 5.5 [Lincolnshire PCC's Annual Report 2017-2018](#)
- 5.6 Letter from Lincolnshire PCC.
- 5.7 Government Events – Letter indicating impact goals.
- 5.8 [Independent Crime Recording Confidence Panel 2018-19.](#)
- 5.9 [HMICFRS, Lincolnshire Police: Crime Data Integrity inspection 2018](#)
- 5.10 [HMICFRS, Lincolnshire Police - Crime Data Integrity re-inspection 2019](#)