Institution: University of Gloucestershire

Unit of Assessment: 14

Title of case study: "The state and the vulnerable: using social research to facilitate more effective policy intervention and support for 'at risk' groups"

Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:
Professor Kenny Lynch: 2015 onwards
Dr Sam Scott: 2010 onwards

Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:

Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Professor Kenny Lynch	Professor of Development & Communities	September 2005 to present
Dr Sam Scott	Senior Lecturer & Course Leader in Geography	September 2013 to present

Period when the claimed impact occurred:
2012 onwards

Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

Research by Geographers (**Lynch** and **Scott**) at the University of Gloucestershire on vulnerable populations, focused on precarious workers, rural communities, those in supported housing and young people at risk of offending. This research has informed debates and decision-making at key governmental departments and agencies (European Commission Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI); UK Director of Labour Market Enforcement (DLME); UK Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA); Parliamentary Inquiry for the Committees on Work & Pensions and Housing, Communities & Local Government, Gloucestershire Constabulary; Restorative Gloucestershire) and has also informed the practice of public protection professionals.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

Governments, especially those in liberal and neo-liberal states, are facing considerable budgetary pressure whilst also being expected to support (often growing) vulnerable populations. Research conducted by **Professor Kenny Lynch**, Professor of Development & Communities, and **Dr Sam Scott**, Course Leader for Geography, has contributed to increasing the knowledge base on these vulnerable populations to improve and inform policy, practice and intervention. Their research summarised in Scott et al. (2020) has been conducted as part of the University of Gloucestershire's interdisciplinary Social Vulnerabilities Research Group (SVRG), which is led by Lynch. In particular, their research has: (a) identified how best to assess the scale and nature of non-compliance in the labour market, and thus improve enforcement activity; (b) examined the specific issue of precarious agricultural employment, especially of migrants, at a UK and wider European level; (c) assessed how the impact of austerity leads to the most vulnerable social housing tenants becoming increasingly reliant on declining government funding and regulation of their housing and the support they require and (d) evaluated how police officers and young people can develop positive and constructive relationships if they participate in restorative practice processes and (e) identified approaches to the management of community assets at a local level.

Since 2007, **Scott** has focused his research on precarious workers and labour exploitation: reflected in work for the UK government's 'Gangmasters Licensing Authority' (2007-2009) and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2010-2012). Most recently, he has focused on how to improve insights into labour market abuse and how to increase access to justice for exploited workers. This connects to the broader challenge of how to improve the evidence base on vulnerable populations to support more effective policy intervention. Responding to this challenge, Scott's work on labour exploitation globally (Scott, 2017) helped to inform his critique of the UK policy approach to protecting workers from harm (Scott, 2019). This insight was then central to a collaborative project (with UCL and LSE) looking at how the UK government could best assess the scale and nature of non-compliance in the UK labour market (Cockbain et al., 2019). Five approaches were evaluated in work commissioned by the Government's 'Director of Labour Market Enforcement': a systematic review; existing administrative data; a worker survey; worker interviews; and, stakeholder interviews. It was felt that, after scoring each approach, a worker survey and in-depth worker interviews, allied with stakeholder input via focus groups, was the optimal research strategy. These recommendations then informed the UK Labour Market Enforcement Strategy 2019-20 (see HM Government, 2019: 64-65). This went on to underpin further DLME-commissioned research in 2020 including work Scott helped carry out on 'The Scale and Nature of Precarious Work in the UK' (Pósch et al., 2020) and work that the DLME is currently commissioning (where Cockbain et al. (2019) was cited as a template by the DLME for future researchers to follow). Much of this work has been informed by research on migrant workers, especially those employed in global food production. Scott has been part of a circa £1m grant based at NTNU in Trondheim (Norway) but drawing on case-studies of migrant food industry workers in Norway, the UK and US.

Lynch has conducted research in the UK and abroad on understanding the challenges facing young people and the organisations that work with them. For example, **Lynch** was a lead member of a team evaluating local youth projects that worked with young people in the UK at risk of offending (Hobson, **Lynch**, Payne & Ellis, 2018), supported housing for the most vulnerable (Hobson, **Lynch** & Lodge, 2020; **Lynch**, Hobson & Dooley, 2016) and how local communities assess their assets (Hobson, **Lynch,** Roberts & Payne, 2019). Hobson et al (2020) was co-written with a supported housing practitioner and **Lynch** et al (2016) led to the invitation to give evidence to the Communities and Local Government and Work and Pensions Committees' inquiry into the Future of Supported Housing (see section 4). **Lynch** and Hobson are supervising a PhD project in which a Supported Housing practitioner is researching models of value generation in the sector.

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

Cockbain, E., **Scott, S**., Pósch, K. and Bradford, B. (2019) How can the scale and nature of labour market non-compliance in the UK best be assessed? UCL/ University of Gloucestershire/ LSE: London.

Pósch, K., **Scott, S**., Cockbain, E. and Bradford, B. (2020) The Scale and Nature of Precarious Work in the UK. UCL/ University of Gloucestershire/ LSE: London.

Scott, S. (2019) Protecting Workers from Exploitation in Neoliberal States: A Social Harm Perspective. Justice, Power and Resistance 3.1: 6-36.

Scott, S. (2017) *Labour exploitation and work-based harm*. Policy Press: Bristol.

Hobson, J., **Lynch, K.** and Lodge, A. (2019) Residualisation in supported housing: an organisational case study. *Housing, Care and Support.* 23(1) 1-13. doi:10.1108/HCS-09-2019-0019

Hobson, J. **Lynch, K.,** Payne, B. and Ellis, E. (2018) Are police-led social crime prevention initiatives effective? A process and outcome evaluation of a UK youth intervention. *International Criminal Justice Review* Online First. https://doi.org/10.1177/1057567718814891

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

The contributions of research conducted by **Lynch** and **Scott** to the evidence base on vulnerable populations have initiated and informed policy discussions and educated the next generation of police/public protection professionals.

The researchers have been invited to directly engage with national decision makers to provide evidence and recommendations. In 2017, **Lynch** and his collaborators were invited to give evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry for Communities and Local Government and Work and Pensions based on their work on supported housing (**Lynch**, Hobson & Dooley, 2017). This evidence confirmed that changes due to austerity were resulting in a process of residualisation as support shrinks to the most vulnerable tenant-clients which leads to increased reliance on dwindling provision and consequently exacerbating vulnerability. In the research on community assets, their work has informed one council's engagement with local communities because for example it "*has helped parish councils understand their own 'place' and specifically which assets/infrastructure is there as they start to plan for how to spend money secured through the Community Infrastructure Levy*." This work will now explore the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other local authorities and scaled up. Outputs from **Lynch's** research on youth forums has provided evidence of the change in attitudes between young people and police, improving relations and de-escalating potentially difficult encounters. Restorative Gloucestershire use the research outputs "*when conducting public outreach activities together with the Gloucestershire Constabulary, when initiating community forums and in sensitising and training on the issues of young people and promoting restorative practice interventions*."

In 2019, **Scott** and his collaborators were invited to two Government run events to discuss their research conclusions on how to assess the scale and nature of non-compliance in the labour market. The two events drew in representatives from the Director of Labour Market Enforcement (DLME), BEIS (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy), EAS (Employment Agencies Standards Inspectorate), GLAA (Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority), HMRC NMW/NLW (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs National Minimum/ Living Wage Unit) and the Home Office. Recommendations made by **Scott** and collaborators on how to assess non-compliance in the labour market were directly cited in the DLME's (Director of Labour Market Enforcement) UK Labour Market Enforcement Strategy 2019-20: "*Therefore, following the scoping work undertaken for this Strategy (*Cockbain et al. 2019)*, I recommend that Government supports me in meeting my obligations under the Immigration Act 2016 by providing the necessary investment to undertake robust research in 2019/20 into measuring the scale and nature of non-compliance in the labour market*" (HM Government, 2019: 64-65). Following the release of this strategy report, the DLME again emphasized the research approach recommended by **Scott** and his collaborators (HM Government, 2020: 46). In January 2020, **Scott** and his collaborators received further DLME funding to continue their work. Specifically, they were asked by government to start assessing the scale and nature of precarious work in the UK using the Understanding Society Survey. This research was commissioned as part of the DLME's statutory duty to report on the scale and nature of non-compliance in the UK labour market as set out in the Immigration Act, 2016. Evidence of the impact of **Scott's** work for the DLME has been provided by the head of the UK Director of Labour Market Enforcement (DLME) secretariat, who states that: "What we

found particularly strong was the distillation of a wide array of technical concepts into concise arguments and conclusions. The works provided have always met the requirements and expected standards, if not exceeded them. We therefore have a high degree of confidence in the work provided" (Harrison, 2020). Most recently, the DLME (2020) cited Cockbain et al. (2019) as their preferred framework for future research in the area of labour market non-compliance and will shape future policy and government plans for future research streams. It has been confirmed that this work will have *"recurring utility in the lead up to and on introduction of the planned Single Enforcement Body – including its design, remit and research priorities – thus having a significant impact on the wider machinery of government"*.

As part of his focus on labour exploitation, **Scott** has specifically researched migrant labour in the global food industry. He has been a member of a large research consortium (GLARUS) based out of Norway (NTNU, Trondheim) that has carried out a three-country case-study (centred on the UK, Norway and USA). This research has produced a state-of-the-art review of 'international labour migration and food production in rural Europe' that has recently been taken up by the European Commission DG AGRI (EC, 2019, 2020) who noted that: "**Dr Scott** and co-author's [Professor Rye] study represented an important piece of departure for our readings as well as a trigger for further ideas. This was due to the encompassing nature of their analysis, which thoroughly and critically reviewed the existing literature, as well as provided suggestions for future avenues for research" (Scipioni, 2020). Alongside the European Commission, DEFRA has also connected to **Scott's** work, noting that it: "has been very helpful, and has indeed furthered Defra's understanding of the UK seasonal labour market and the roles played by its actors" (Dobinson, 2020). Most recently, and based on his food industry labour research, Scott's work was cited in the key 2020 report 'Mapping the UK Food System – a report for the UKRI Transforming UK Food Systems Programme' (Hasnain et al., 2020).

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

DLME (2020) *Assessment of the scale and nature of labour market non-compliance in the UK*. Available at: https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/1a16afc0-f835-4a0d-a9f4-f80b64a4b7c7

Dobinson, L. (2020) Letter from a DEFRA Economic Advisor to the University of Gloucestershire, June 19th 2020.

European Commission (2019) *Migration in EU rural areas.* JRC Science for Policy Report. Available at: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/42021ed9-9307-11e9-9369-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

European Commission (2020) *Meeting labour demand in agriculture in times of COVID 19 pandemic*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/annual-reports/meeting-labour-demand-agriculture-times-covid-19-pandemic

Goode, Adrian (2021) Community & Place Development Officer Tewkesbury Borough Council, Letter to the University January 27th 2021.

Harrison, T. (2020) Letter from the head of secretariat supporting the UK Director of Labour Market Enforcement (DLME) to the University of Gloucestershire, July 31st 2020.

Hasnain, S., Ingram, J. and Zurek, M. 2020. *Mapping the UK Food System – a report for the UKRI Transforming UK Food Systems Programme*. Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford, Oxford.

HM Government (2019) *United Kingdom Labour Market Enforcement Strategy. Director of Labour Market Enforcement*. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/labour-market-enforcement-strategy-2019-to-2020

HM Government (2020) United Kingdom Labour Market Enforcement Annual Report 2018/19. Director of Labour Market Enforcement. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/labour-market-enforcement-annual-report-2018-to-2019

Hobson, J., Lynch, K. and Dooley, P. (2017) Communities and Local Government and Work and Pensions Committees. Oral evidence: Future of Supported Housing, 27th February, 2017. Transcript of evidence session. In: Communities and Local Government and Work and Pensions Committees Oral evidence: Future of Supported Housing, HC 904, 21/02/2017, House of Commons. http://eprints.glos.ac.uk/4398/

Payne, B., Hobson, J. and Lynch, K. (2018) *Youth Forums Restorative Practice Workshops.* [Video] http://eprints.glos.ac.uk/7046/

Scipioni, M. (2020) European Commission Project Officer, DG AGRI, email to University of Gloucestershire, June 17th 2020.