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Creators	Cockcroft, Tom, Bryant, Robin and Kerval, Harshad

Title: 'The Impact of Dispersal Powers on Congregating Youth'

Structured Abstract

Purpose:

To present research which evaluated the impact of Dispersal Orders in an English town.

Design/Methodology/Approach:

The study used a mixed method design to, qualitatively, explore the impact of the intervention on young people and, quantitatively, the impact on recorded crime/anti-social behaviour.

Findings:

The use of Dispersal Orders in the town being studied highlighted a number of issues detrimental to young people. Powers appeared to be used to control the congregating rather than anti-social behaviour of young people and their use could increase young peoples' feelings of vulnerability.

Practical Implications:

The findings suggest that Dispersal Orders (and the newer Public Spaces Protection Orders) may be ineffective if they are used without the focus of a specific anti-social behaviour.

Social Implications:

The findings suggest that the use of Dispersal Orders to deal with non anti-social behaviour issues are likely to alienate young people and have the potential to inadvertently place them at further risk. They also suggest that the Public Spaces Protection Order could very well exacerbate the substantial issues which have been identified in the present research.

Originality/Value:

This research is original and suggests that the negative findings of earlier pieces of research into Dispersal Orders can be replicated in very different geographical environments and in areas with low levels of general deprivation where no substantial anti-social behaviour issues were identified. Furthermore, it uses original data to contextualise contemporary developments in anti-social behaviour, namely the introduction of Public Spaces Protection Orders.

Introduction

The origins of the Dispersal Order are to be found in the anti-social behaviour agenda which, in the United Kingdom, has led to a profound shift in the practices, discourses and focus of criminal justice over recent years. Key to understanding the power, the attraction and the criticisms of the anti-social behaviour agenda is its founding principle of subjectivity. Anti-social behaviour in England and Wales is officially defined under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s 1(1)(A) as acting, 'in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as himself'. This key milestone of recent legislative history has attracted descriptions such as 'capacious' (Crawford, 2008), 'ill-

defined' (Crawford, 2008), and 'subjective' (Prior, 2009). This definitional ambiguity (Prior, 2009), coupled with a scarcity of empirical data concerning the extent of the anti-social behaviour problem and the effectiveness of policies introduced to counter it, has led to an incoherent knowledge base that makes anti-social behaviour such a potent policy focus (Prior, 2009). At the same time, according to Squires (2006), the widespread perception of a 'justice gap' meant that anti-social behaviour, and our fear of it, had become a central concern for the British public. This process was aided by the Home Office and the media perpetuating demonising rhetoric which succeeded in conflating anti-social behaviour with the behaviour of young people. As part of the Government's response to such concerns, Part 4 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003) (ss. 30-36) introduced dispersal powers which authorized the police in England and Wales to break up gatherings (in designated areas) of two or more people that were considered to present a recurrent threat of anti-social behaviour.

This research is significant in that it draws attention to the consequences of using Dispersal Orders in very different geographic locations and social contexts (characterized by different dynamics of social exclusion) to those where existing research has taken place. In this respect, the present research provides a notably different location, and context, to the research of Crawford and Lister (2007) that focused on predominantly urban areas. Additionally, where their research sites were described as having identifiable crime/anti-social behaviour issues associated with young people, the area drawn upon for this research had no substantive crime/anti-social behaviour issues specifically associated with young people. For this locality, the foremost concern was of the 'congregating' behaviour, rather than the anti-social or criminal behaviour, of young people. Furthermore, this research provides us with information with which to speculate about the impact of the Public Space Protection Order, a bolstering of previous dispersal powers, which was introduced in 2014.

Public Spaces Protection Orders

Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) were introduced in 2014, under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, and allow for the formal restriction of activities that can be engaged in within a specific designated area by those who enter that location. This act, through modifying existing dispersal powers, ensured that PSPOs effectively superseded Dispersal Orders as the key mechanism with which to control geographical space due to offering an enhanced combination of versatility and punitive sanctions. PSPOs can be directed at a number of broadly defined behaviours and breaches of these orders represent criminal offences. Furthermore, PSPOs can be put in place for an initial period of three years with an option to extend if necessary.

These powers have proved attractive to a number of local authorities. For example, Bassetlaw Council, in Nottinghamshire, have proposed a PSPO to be put in place at Celtic Point in Gateford, Worksop that would prohibit, "...under 16 year olds (who are not under the effective control of a parent or are [sic] responsible person aged 18 or over) gathering in groups of three or more" (Bassetlaw District Council, 2015). Similarly, another broad-ranging PSPO was introduced in Runcorn, Cheshire which, according to the Liverpool Echo newspaper, banned a range of behaviours including that of wearing 'disguise', depicted on the signage prepared for the area under the order by an image of a youth wearing a hooded top (Clay, 2015).

Whilst academic commentary on the PSPO has yet to emerge, campaigners and journalists have drawn attention to this new form of control over public space. For example, Liberty

(2015) suggests that the targets of such powers are inadequately defined, that the powers are too punitive and that they will criminalise vulnerable groups. Likewise, Garrett (2015), writing in The Guardian newspaper, suggests that PSPOs may be attractive to some local authorities in respect of the part that they can play in terms of urban regeneration agendas, an issue also associated with Dispersal Orders (see Kennelly and Watt, 2013).

Issues

Some key concerns about the anti-social behaviour agenda, in relation to the powers represented by Dispersal Orders and Public Spaces Protection Orders, will be addressed in the following sections.

Anti-Social Behaviour and Young People

Distinctions between 'old' and 'young', the 'established' and 'newcomers', are not new social phenomenon (Elias and Scotson, 1994) and can be perceived as central to ongoing and embedded inter-generational tensions (Muncie, 2015) that impact negatively upon the young. Central to these often territorially-driven conflicts are, according to Elias and Scotson (1994), moves by the excluded to resist the inferior status ascribed to them by the established groups who seek to maintain their supremacy. Simultaneously, these informal and localised processes are reinforced by the combined efforts of the state and media to legitimise these constructions of problematic youth. As Young (2009) notes, "The amorphous grouping of the young people on the street becomes reconstructed into the hierarchical structure of the gang by the targeting of police patrols and the persuasive narratives of the mass media (p. 7). In

this respect, therefore, we can see that young people fall victim to socially constructed depictions of youth behaviour that lead others to judge them negatively.

Such social phenomena are widespread and may enable us to understand some of the reasons for rise of the anti-social behaviour agenda. What is interesting is that these types of tension appear to have become formally and informally acknowledged as legitimate. This is shown in the work of Jamieson (2012) who notes how anti-social behaviour occupies an uneasy and unarticulated position between social and criminal justice policy. Likewise, she notes that it is this lack of definitional clarity that has facilitated the 'criminalization of social policy' around young people, and led to the, "construction of a 'responsibilised' and 'adulterised' young offender" (p. 460) that underplays the vulnerabilities associated with youth.

Burney (2009 a) suggests that these processes have become embedded in the practices of the police who have increasingly taken anti-social behaviour to be synonymous with the behaviour of young people, a perception common throughout wider society, according to Squires (2006). To Burney, young people who use public space and who congregate together for leisure purposes are increasingly attracting condemnation for those very reasons. Thus, "Public space is presented as a contested arena in which adults are asked to assume that younger people have lesser rights" (Burney, 2009 a, p. 72). These judgements lack any substantive base bar for the fact that 'others' have taken exception to the group. To Burney (2009 b), therefore, anti-social behaviour is a mere slogan used for, "targeting individuals whose behaviour upsets the public" (p. 37). The advent of the coalition government in 2010, according to Jamieson (2012), accelerated this process of 'social panopticonism' (p. 460) and looks likely to ensure that social policy will continue to impact negatively on young people over the coming years. According to Kennelly and Watts (2013), who explored the impact of

dispersal powers during the London Olympics of 2012, young people perceived that their non-criminal behaviour was being interpreted, unfairly, as criminal or threatening. The net effect of the use of such powers, according to Kennelly and Watts, was that of, "...criminalizing youthful sociability in urban public spaces" (2013, p.3). What is of concern here, therefore, is that the powers afforded initially by Dispersal Orders and, latterly, by the more powerful PSPOs may facilitate and further legitimate the type of processes described above.

Location, Congregation and Social Capital

The control of social spaces through the types of power embedded within Dispersal Orders and PSPOs draws us to some important issues around location, the reasons why young people congregate and the impact upon social capital of inhibiting congregation. Social geographers are increasingly viewing age as a key determinant of how people access and experience particular locations and physical spaces. Young adults, and teenagers, whilst traditionally ignored by the discipline, are being seen as ever more important to their understanding of how interaction (including conflict and tension) between age groups in particular locations impacts on people's experiences and their identities.

Whilst the concept of location is integral to any understanding of powers that seek to exert control upon social spaces, it appears particularly germane to a piece of research that focusses on such issues within an English coastal town. First, to date, no published research has explored the use of dispersal powers within such an environment. Second, as Smith (2012) shows, coastal towns, whilst subject to the processes of social change that impact on

communities more generally, are also liable to be impacted by more specific processes that lead to further or different forms of segregation between social groups.

The work of Agarwal and Blunt (2006) is particularly helpful in exploring the dynamics of social exclusion in coastal towns. They suggest that the impacts of social exclusion reach beyond the forms experienced and reported in inner-city and rural areas as coastal economies are driven by particular dynamics linked to industry and employment. Furthermore, populations might include higher than average proportions of elderly and young people. One implication of Agarwal and Blunt's work, in the context of the use of dispersal powers and their relationship with social exclusion, is to suggest that findings from research conducted in urban or rural areas might have limited use in explaining the impact of dispersal powers in coastal towns. This may particularly be the case given the particular demographic polarisation of old and young that they identify in coastal communities.

Another issue to be addressed here concerns the reasons why young people congregate in groups in public space. 'Deficit' models of youth behaviour (Brooks, 2009, Osler and Starkey, 2003) propose that youth is a unique lifestage and that the behaviour and attitudes of young people are seen as inherently problematic and appropriate for intervention. In doing so, young people are viewed as a 'social problem', a form of reasoning which appears to underpin both dispersal powers and the PSPO.

However, Watts and Stenson (1998) found that young people tended to congregate in particular locations due to an affinity with the area, a lack of ease of access to transport and feelings of vulnerability. The latter point, especially, appears to have particular relevance to the experiences of female and middle-class young people. The class issue may especially be

of relevance to the present study given that the town where the research took place held a low rank for a number of correlates of deprivation. The 'localism' referred to by Watts and Stenson may also be exacerbated by the fact that one of the key barriers to the regeneration of coastal resorts has been insufficient investment in transport systems (Walton and Browne, 2010). Taking such ideas into account, we are left with a counter-narrative to the 'deficit' model, where youths publicly congregate together to overcome feelings of vulnerability, because of difficulties in accessing other social spaces and because, quite simply, they identify with particular locations. Similarly, location, according to Hopkins (2010), becomes bound up with ideas of identity to young people and, as a result, young people's identities change between geographic spaces. The importance of location as a 'marker of identity' (p.11) is often misunderstood by adults and leads to external attempts to re-establish control of public space.

To Shildrick and MacDonald (2008), informal support from key reference groups such as family and friends is invaluable as a means of overcoming a range of negative impacts, from social exclusion to poverty. Additionally, they highlight the divisive powers of new regulations, in terms of disrupting an individual's bonds with peers and their shared environment, and shows how they may impact negatively on young people's ability to build social capital. Likewise, Raffo and Reeves (2000) suggest that young people may congregate, in public, as a means of problem-solving structural issues that are imposed upon them. From this perspective, disrupting groups of congregating youth may have severe impacts on young peoples' ability to develop social capital and this may further disadvantage them throughout their life course.

Methodology

The aim of this project was to assess the impact and effectiveness of the introduction of dispersal areas in a coastal town in the South of England (referred to through the pseudonym 'Southtown') and utilised a mixed-methods approach. Mixed-methods approaches can be adopted for a variety of rationale, according to Burke Johnson and Christensen (2014), such as 'triangulation', 'complementarity', 'development', 'initiation' and 'expansion'. In this case, the method was used for 'expansion' as it allowed for the use of two different methodologies to explore two separate components of the research brief. The quantitative element focused on the impact of Dispersal Orders on recorded levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, whilst the qualitative elements focussed on perceived impacts on young people.

The qualitative data were generated through 15 semi-structured interviews (with two police officers, three police community support officers (PCSOs), two local councillors, five residents and three youth workers) and one focus group with six young people aged between 12 and 16. Input from children was unfortunately limited due to the need for the young people to complete consent forms and for a parent or guardian to also complete an assent form. This ruled out the use of street intercept methods (Miller et al, 1997) which would have led to a larger sample. Instead, access was sought through organisations and a local youth worker was identified who was able to arrange a focus group.

The focus group of local young people was undertaken with six participants as larger groups may tend to inhibit young peoples' responsiveness (Hopkins, 2007). The work of Gibson (2007) provides some guidance regarding the use of focus groups with children and young people and draws attention to a number of issues including the role of the moderator, introducing the group and conducting the discussion. This work was helpful in terms of

influencing how the focus group was approached. The moderator was very conscious of the age gap between himself and the members of the focus group and, accordingly, aimed to be more participant-focused than he would with a focus group comprised of adults. When introducing the session, the moderator took time to very clearly explain the purpose of the focus group, the types of questions that would be asked and also outlined basic ground rules for the discussion, such as letting one person talk at a time. During the discussion, attempts were made to elicit responses from every member of the group without explicitly focussing on particular individuals.

The semi-structured interviews conducted with adult interviewees were based upon a set of standardised questions relating to stakeholder perceptions of the dispersal area and its effectiveness. Respondents were identified through snowball sampling (Martin, 2000) facilitated by the local Community Safety Unit. The choice of interview method allowed freedom for unanticipated themes to emerge throughout the interview. Following transcription of the interview data, a thematic analysis (Braun and Clark, 2006) was undertaken. The framework underpinning the analysis was essentially constructivist and Guba and Lincoln (1994) highlight the challenges of accurately assessing the 'Transferability' of findings generated under such conceptual frameworks, especially given the limited sample of young people. In particular, they insist that researchers need to exercise full transparency in providing sufficient contextual information to enable others to make informed judgements about how best to apply such methods and data elsewhere. This view coincides with the views of Malterud (2001) who notes that the analysis of qualitative forms of data demands appropriate judgements about such materials to be made. Furthermore, she suggests that high quality qualitative research should not overstate the material which it

draws upon and this was used as a guiding principle in the analysis and presentation of the data in the present research.

Data Emerging from the Interviews and Focus Group

Young People

'…I felt quite targeted because we weren't doing anything, we were literally standing there talking to our friends. It was like we were targeted as 'criminals' for just standing there' (Young Person 1)

'It makes people feel that they can't go out with their friends because they're just going to get separated anyway' (Young Person 1)

'It's like you're in one group and the rest of the group somehow disappear so you can't find anyone else to talk to' (Young Person 2)

'We go to the seafront because there's loads of lights, my house is up the road so if anything happens I can run home and if anything happens as well, because it's local…it's the base of everything…we know what to do if something does happen. It's a lot more safe because you can see what's going on, there's always PCSOs walking up and down…' (Young Person 1)

'I think it makes it more dangerous because you're separated from people…For people like us…vulnerable young girls…if you get separated into two's it makes it a bit more dangerous for us' (Young Person 1)

'I think young people feel safer in larger groups of people…it's like safety in numbers and being dispersed kind of destroys that' (Young Person 4)

'It was annoying because we were waiting outside Tesco to try and get away from people who were trying hurt our friend and the police were telling us to go back to that place' (Young Person 2)

'Like when people see a large group of young people they immediately think there's going to be trouble and that's normally not the case. They're just out as a group socializing' (Young Person 4)

Youth Workers

'...there's safety in numbers, there's always lots of adults around and they don't actually have huge levels of crime in Southtown' (Youth Worker 2)

'I can't seriously see how it's improved the safety of young people in Southtown. I don't see it as a benefit at all to the young people' (Youth Worker 2)

'In Southtown we have a very conservative ageing population who like to use the authority of the police and the local council' (Youth Worker 3)

Police and PCSOs

'It's a horrible problem...A lot of them aren't what you'd class as a bad kid, they're from good homes, they're from good schools, they've not got any other problems but they like to go there… You have literally got a group of a hundred kids that meet because they feel happy there' (Police Officer 1)

'Southtown…youths there say 'we come here because we feel safe. If we go to Eastown or we go to Northtown we'll get our heads kicked in'…so they also congregate there because they feel safe' (Police Officer 1)

'They do feel safer in groups and you wouldn't advise someone to walk across a park at night on their own' (Police Officer 2)

'Every one [*dispersal area*] we have done down here has been directed at youth and I think it actually gives youth a bad name and I think you're criminalizing youth to be perfectly honest' (PCSO 1)

'…If they are hanging around because they are children and they speak the same language or they are like-minded people…why should we be dispersing them?' (PCSO 3)

Residents

"I think it was good for the police because when they came they had a leg to stand on...to say, you're not allowed to be here" (Resident 1)

"...I've rung up when there's groups of yobs congregating and the police simply aren't interested...If I ring up and say I've got a bunch of kids outside, they're being a pain in the neck...they just laugh at you" (Resident 5)

Councillors

'The chief advantage is not in statistics of what people actually see as dispersals or arrests or whatever. The chief advantage I suspect is that the people who use the town and who are living near the town see the authorities at least attempting to do something...the idea that they have the power to disperse groups of young people who older people...there's a lot of older people in Southtown...find intimidating' (Councillor 1)

Overview of Findings

The thematic analysis of the interview data allowed for the identification of a number of themes (rationale, appropriateness, impact on young people, impact on crime/anti-social behaviour) which provide a focus through which to reflect on the extracts from interviews presented above. These are briefly outlined below. It is important to note that there were differences of opinion between and within the groups. In particular, residents and councillors expressed views that were supportive of and opposed to the dispersal order.

Rationale

Congregating youths, rather than anti-social behaviour, appears to have been perceived by over half of the interviewees as the prime driver behind the introduction of the Dispersal

Order. One police officer described the introduction as 'political' and as being something that was perceived as an 'appropriate' form of intervention by local councillors, without councillors really considering whether there was a rational justification for it.

Appropriateness

One youth worker, one PCSO and one police officer suggested that Dispersal Orders can be used advantageously when implemented as a strategic response to a well-defined issue. In terms of the Southtown Dispersal Order the three felt that the implementation of the order, that covered the majority of the town, represented an inappropriate use of the powers. Although concerns were expressed by a majority of members of the community regarding congregating youths, a minority voiced disquiet at the use of dispersal areas for dealing with such behaviour. Likewise, the views of the two councillors interviewed differed significantly with one being very supportive of the intervention whilst the other was opposed. Overall, councillors and residents appeared more likely to view the dispersal powers as a positive intervention.

Impact on Young People

Eight of the fifteen adults interviewed (inclusive of all adult stakeholder groups) explicitly referred to the potential for the Dispersal Order to be used unfairly on youngsters. Furthermore, such a strategy also meant that what young people saw as the more explicitly anti-social behaviour displayed by adults was ignored by police officers and PCSOs. The data suggests that young people may congregate in groups (and in specific geographical areas) due to feelings of vulnerability. Attention was also drawn to the ways in which the act of being

dispersed could actually place young people at further potential risk. For the majority of the members of the public who were interviewed for this research, the safety of young people was not raised as a substantive issue.

Impact on Crime/Anti-Social Behaviour

Data from the interviews suggest that over half felt that either the Dispersal Order had led to no increase in the level of public safety or that they were 'unsure' of its effectiveness. The statistical analysis of the impact of the dispersal area on recorded crime and anti-social behaviour appeared to show little overall benefit, in terms of crime reduction, when adopting a quantitative decline in recorded crime or anti-social behaviour as evidence of effectiveness. Any reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour in the relevant areas during the period of the Dispersal Order, were largely cancelled out by increases in neighbouring wards where dispersal powers were not being used, suggesting that displacement may have occurred during the period that the dispersal powers were being used.

Discussion

The research findings appear to support those of Crawford and Lister (2007) despite the research taking place in quite dissimilar environments. Their work focused largely on use of dispersal powers in response to specific crime and anti-social behaviour issues. In contrast, Southtown was an altogether different setting for a Dispersal Order being a small coastal town with an economy largely based upon tourism and an above average retired population. Similarly, it had no history of substantial crime or anti-social behaviour problems. The Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that the wards that made up the district under investigation

were low-ranking for general deprivation, child deprivation and pensioner deprivation. The distinction is an important one as it may allow us to explore the idea that, for Southtown, factors other than crime and disorder may have a part to play in decision-making surrounding the introduction of Dispersal Orders. Indeed, the work of Agarwal and Blunt (2006) amply illustrates the ways in which social exclusion may take different forms within coastal communities than those experienced in inner-city and rural areas. The data in the present research appears to indicate a polarised demographic profile to the town where there is a noticeable skewing towards the young and the old as proportionately large local populations that engage in limited interaction with each other. This feature was highlighted by both youth workers and police officers and may provide a partial explanation for the identification of congregating, rather than anti-social, youth as a problem.

At the same time, young people's accounts of being dispersed suggest that not only can being dispersed increase perceptions of vulnerability but also pose risks to actual safety. This issue of vulnerability features in the accounts of police staff, youth workers and young people themselves. Through the present research, a picture emerges that appears to strongly support the idea of youth 'localism', proposed by Watts and Stenson (1998), whereby young people cultivate feelings of affinity for particular locations and that these are intrinsically bound up with personal perceptions of safety and vulnerability. Likewise, Crawford and Lister (2007) note that the Dispersal Order effectively silences and removes young people from public sight, a process that may serve those individuals poorly as they emerge into adulthood. Furthermore, if Raffo and Reeves (2000) are correct in their assertion that youths congregate, partially, as a collective means of problem-solving externally-imposed challenges, then attempts to exclude groups of youths from public space may serve to further inhibit opportunities to develop social capital.

What is also of potential interest is the extent of variation in the views of the police and some of the councillors/local residents (although it is important to note here that the two councillors held different views, and therefore we cannot refer to a consensus). Whilst any attempt to explain such variations will be purely speculative, it may be helpful to note that an acknowledgement and understanding of child protection and vulnerability have become increasingly important elements of the police role over recent years. Indeed, policing has witnessed a significant broadening of both its role and the demographic from which it draws its officers over recent years (Cockcroft, 2013) and this may play some part in explaining divergences between police and popular opinion. Police officers, therefore, may increasingly be aware of the 'significant tension' (Crawford and Lister, 2007, p. 69) between the anti-social behaviour agenda and the responsibilities laid out under *Every Child Matters* and the Children Act (2004). These have led to a situation where child protection, as a concept, is essentially in conflict with, and undermined by, the apparent arbitrariness of the Dispersal Order (Stone, 2005). Similarly, the findings suggest that the members of police staff and PCSOs were largely unsympathetic, like youth workers, to 'deficit model' views of local young people. Again it might be possible to speculate that this was due to factors such as resentment at what might be seen as political interference in local policing issues represented by local authority pressure to use dispersal powers. What is also not clear is the real source of the apparent demonisation of young people in the locality. Agarwal and Blunt's (2006) work suggests that the polarization of the local young and elderly communities might be a factor whereas Young's work (2009) on moral panics, conversely, suggests that these tensions emerge as a result of police action and media reporting. It appears to be the case that the police, in this locality at least, were reluctant to engage in actions that might encourage such negative depictions to arise. The role of local media did not emerge through the data.

Conclusion

Whilst the Dispersal Order is not explicitly articulated as a youth measure at a formal level, Crawford and Lister (2007) note the concern of young people in their research that the anti-social behaviour of adults generally fails to attract dispersal interventions. The present research appears to support this assertion with the majority of respondents perceiving congregating youth rather than anti-social behaviour as the driver behind the introduction of Dispersal Orders. This binary between youth and adults can be developed, as the work of Millie (2008) and Jamieson (2012) does, to show how the exclusionary properties of the anti-social behaviour agenda highlight a weakening of the distinction between attempts at urban regeneration and the control of marginalized groups. This concept is extended further towards the concept of territorial and spatial control by the work of Kennelly and Watt (2013) who highlight this area of ambiguity in respect of dispersal powers. Similarly, Garrett (2015) notes allied concerns surrounding the extension of those powers found in the new PSPOs. At a practical level, once again, one must highlight the potential of such interventions to communicate symbolically about young people in terms that reinforce deficit models of their behaviour. We should also remain aware of the potential negative impact of these powers on opportunities to develop social capital, not least in areas where social exclusion takes on particular nuances such as in coastal communities which may be characterised by more pronounced inter-generational tensions.

This development of control over social spaces appears to support the views of Jamieson (2012) who anticipated a continuation and intensification of such exclusionary processes in the post-2010 political landscape. Indeed, the introduction of the PSPO can be perceived as

supporting Jamieson's perception that we are witnessing the further criminalization of social policy. Further, the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (2014) may be seen as a further embedding of the use of legislation as a 'substantive moral aspiration' rather than a 'morally neutral instrument', a distinction identified by Simmonds (2005, p. 91). This ongoing amalgamation of morality and legislation appears as a rational response to anti-social behaviour in a society where anti-social behaviour has become a 'virtual metaphor' (Squires, 2006, p. 151) for the behaviour of young people. Both the Dispersal Order and the PSPO (from what limited information that we currently have in terms of the latter) can be seen as a means of communicating symbolic messages based around the problematic status of youth through their ability to reinforce 'deficit' models of youth behaviour. Simultaneously, they provide adult populations with the opportunity to seize physical and metaphoric control of what have essentially become the contested public territories of the 21st century.

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