



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Multi Agency Burglary Dwelling Reduction Tactics



Burglary Dwelling

DEFINITION: BURGLARY

THEFT ACT 1968 SEC 9(1,2)

(1) "A person is guilty of a burglary if -

(a) he enters any building or part of a building as a trespasser and with intent to commit any such offence as is mentioned in subsection (2) below; or

(b) having entered any building or part of a building as a trespasser he steals or attempts to steal anything in the building or that part of it or inflicts or attempts to inflict on any person therein any grievous bodily harm.

(2) The offences referred to in subsection (1)(a) above are offences of stealing anything in the building or part of a building in question, of inflicting on any person therein any grievous bodily harm or of doing unlawful damage to the building or anything therein."

DEFINITION: BURGLARY IN A CARAVAN, HOUSEBOAT ETC

THEFT ACT 1968 SEC 9(4)

References [in the statutory definition of burglary] to a building ...or to a building which is a dwelling, shall apply also to an inhabited vehicle or vessel, and shall apply to any such vehicle or vessel at times when the person having a habitation in it is not there as well as times when he is.

RECORDING PRACTICE: BURGLARY

If a person enters a building as a trespasser and commits or attempts to commit grievous bodily harm, this constitutes burglary under Section 9 of the Theft Act 1968, but should be recorded as GBH. Trespass with intent to commit a sexual offence should be recorded under miscellaneous sexual offences (class 88B).

If entry as a trespasser is gained or attempted and there is evidence of intent to steal but only criminal damage is caused, then this should be recorded as burglary rather than criminal damage.

This document provides tactical options for reducing and preventing domestic burglary.

All the tactics have been used successfully within the environment that they were applied. Not all of the options will be applicable to all areas because of the differences in geography, demographics, the nature of the problem and policing tactics employed.

It will be necessary to determine what is appropriate, realistic, cost effective and, most importantly, that any interventions are based on a proper analysis of the nature and cause of the burglary problem.

Burglary Dwelling Evaluated Tactics:

Intervention	Prevention Category	Good Practice Points	Potential barriers to delivery
<p>Security survey – This is generally a simple list - type questionnaire which is used to gauge the type and number of security measures installed/used and highlight potential criminogenic factors.</p>	<p>Targeted situational crime prevention – Alert conscience; assist compliance</p>	<p>Easy to distribute. Useful method to identify hard to engage groups (i.e. students). Passively increases public awareness about crime prevention.</p>	<p>Response rate (and hence usefulness) may vary widely.</p>
<p>Improving locks on doors windows (area wide) – Similar to locks targeted at individuals, except this action attempts to cover a larger population increasing level of door/window security evenly across an area.</p>	<p>Area-wide crime prevention measures – Harden targets; control access to facilities.</p>	<p>Potentially more useful than targeting few households as it reduces potential for displacement to those with lower lock security. Rapid repair (within a week) may limit the possibility of increased vulnerability of repeat victims from damage caused in original incident.</p>	<p>Locks installed free of charge generated suspicions about motives in the public. Requires a degree of expertise in installation and choosing adequate locks. Potential for conflict with fire safety with SBD locks</p>
<p>Locks on windows and doors (specific properties) – Targeted at vulnerable individuals, may also involve the use of door viewers and door chains to help (particularly elderly residents) by barring entrance to strangers; steel 'flash' around doorframes strengthens doors against being kicked in; high security locks (SBD standard) can be locked internally and are resistant to carding.</p>	<p>Targeted situational crime prevention – Harden targets; control access to facilities.</p>	<p>All weak or vulnerable points of entry need to be targeted. Compliments alley-gating schemes. Rapid repair (within a week minimum) may limit the possibility of increased vulnerability of repeat victims from damage caused in original incident.</p>	<p>Requires protocols on sharing/identifying victim/vulnerable people's addresses. Requires a degree of expertise in installation and choosing adequate locks. Potential for conflict with fire safety with SBD locks. Rapid repair (within a week minimum) may limit the possibility of increased vulnerability of repeat victims from damage caused in original incident.</p>

<p>Barrier plants – Spiky or thorny vegetation can be placed in front of ground floor windows or other items (e.g. exposed drain pipes) which facilitate access to the house.</p>	<p>Area-wide crime prevention measures – Harden targets; control access to facilities, deflect offenders.</p>	<p>There are a number of different barrier plants available – these need to be matched to climate, cost and maintenance consideration.</p>	<p>Limited to residents who have space to put plants in front of windows and drainpipes These items are high maintenance, and therefore may not be effectively used by residents.</p>
<p>Alley gating – This method involves restricting the access to residents who have alleyways that run in parallel to their houses (providing access to the rear of houses). A system of gates are used to prevent access to non-residents.</p>	<p>Area wide crime prevention measures – Control access to facilities.</p>	<p>Photographic evidence and success stories have been used to convince residents of worth. Specifics of gates – durability, transparency and aesthetics are worth considering at the planning phase.</p>	<p>Legal issues in installing these concerning right of way (ramblersⁱⁱ and ownersⁱⁱⁱ); only relates to areas where there is a high level of Victorian terraced or Radburn-style housing. Requires community engagement to gain permission to install gates (particularly for privately owned houses).</p>
<p>Fencing – Area-wide fencing differs from localised fencing in that it attempts to limit access over to an estate-sized area; this may also provide additional access control to individual houses on the periphery.</p>	<p>Area-wide crime prevention measures – Control access to facilities.</p>	<p>Useful where it has been identified that there are weak areas that offenders use to enter estates and escape with stolen goods. Useful where a housing estate backs onto rough or unused ground, woods or large parks.</p>	<p>Some residents may resist development of area wide fencing in that it blocks previous "short cuts". Some projects stated that fencing materials and tools were stolen for long-term installation of fencing.</p>
<p>Tidy up appearance of area – This involves removal of rubbish, repairing broken windows, walls, fencing and other 'street furniture'. Tackles crime generated through broken windows and may increase civic pride.</p>	<p>Area-wide crime prevention measures – Reduce frustrations and stress; broken windows.</p>	<p>Often linked with other environmental measures such as street lighting, tidying and barrier plants.</p>	<p>Effect dependent on whether crime in area relates to broken windows-type issues – i.e. is the state of the environment thought by the public to constitute a problem. Limited to areas which experience a high level of criminal damage offences and fly-tipping/ littering/ drug use.</p>

<p>Street lighting – Improving existing street lights with high lux white light bulbs or installing new street lights in vulnerable areas may help increase the detection of crimes</p>	<p>Area-wide crime prevention measures – Assist natural surveillance; reduce anonymity</p>	<p>Can be used in areas with existing poor (orange sodium) street lighting or in areas with no street lighting. Presence of lights in the day possibly increases civic pride or confidence that the council is doing something in the area. This intervention may also impact on crime other than burglary.</p>	<p>There may be resistance from residents concerned about light pollution or those worried that positioning would mean lights shining directly through windows. Effect of lighting may be limited to night.</p>
<p>Alarms – These can be static alarms linked to telephone lines (call police); sneak in alarms on entrances to alert owner of person entering the dwelling, (requires occupancy); or pendant alarms for elderly (tackling distraction burglary).</p>	<p>Targeted situational crime prevention – Screen exits ; deflect offenders, strengthen formal surveillance.</p>	<p>Complementary interventions are security lighting and crime awareness engagement with criminals and landlords. Limits the time, therefore less items stolen.</p>	<p>Siren alarms may be a neighbourhood nuisance and tend to give false alarms. Offenders may counter alarms (foam spray) or just ignore them due to adequate length of time for escape.</p>
<p>Dawn-to-dusk lighting – These are external/internal lights which are activated by movement or timers, giving signs of occupancy . Also increases natural surveillance.</p>	<p>Targeted situational crime prevention – Deflect offenders ;</p>	<p>Increases uncertainty of occupancy but burglars may discern patterns if the house is observed over a period of time. Assist natural surveillance for a period of time. Easy to install internally (device screws onto existing light fittings). Externally suited to areas optimised for surveillance – hence complements interventions such as street lighting, foliage/hedge lowering and barrier planting.</p>	<p>Observant burglars who consistently pass a house might notice that the lights come on at a certain time in the absence of signs of occupancy (no cars, no sound, rubbish left out for days, etc.).</p>
<p>Foliage height reduction – Trees, hedges and other tall vegetation is lowered in height to allow greater line of sight from houses to boost natural surveillance.</p>	<p>Area-wide crime prevention measures – Control access to facilities; assist natural surveillance</p>	<p>Often linked with other environmental measures such as street lighting, tidying and barrier plants Impact on aesthetics of environment is worth considering</p>	<p>The work needs to be carried out professionally to avoid plants/trees from dying. Limited to areas where foliage has been identified as restricting the lines of sight to detect offenders.</p>

<p>Covert trackers/cameras – Hidden CCTV cameras (activated by pressure, motion or heat-IR) can be deployed to identify burglars. Trackers can be used to identify burglars, fences and stolen goods handlers.</p>	<p>Police enforcement/crackdown – Reduce anonymity; strengthen formal surveillance</p>	<p>Hidden CCTV cameras can be placed around potential repeat victim's homes or in 'trap' decoy homes. Trackers can be placed in household items at the above locations</p>	<p>Decoy houses raise ethical issues and are easily exposed by over-curious neighbours.</p>
<p>Property marking – This method involves marking a valuable item with a unique reference value (home postcode, URN, police station postcode, etc.). There are various methods of marking items ranging from postcode etching, UV pen marking, applying property stickers, and forensic marking</p>	<p>Police enforcement/crackdown – Disrupt markets</p>	<p>Assisted UV property marking is preferable to distributing pens with crime prevention packs or similar methods of dissemination in that they are not always used or may be used ineffectively. Those assisting with UV property marking are also a useful source of crime prevention advice and allow reporting of offences. Property marking methods vary in terms of visibility, permanency and unique referencing and these factors should be matched to modus operandi of burglaries in the area.</p>	<p>Needs to be carried out in an area where there is a high level of resident enthusiasm for crime prevention, ideally with existing or good relations with the local authority and/or police. Invisible property marking techniques are rendered useless if they are not publicised through media reports, posters or in particular window stickers. There are physical limitations of property marking some valuable items such as cash. Can be used to disrupt stolen property markets.</p>
<p>Signs (including posters and stickers) – As with leaflets these can be used to raise general awareness of current interventions (deter offenders) and offer advice on prevention techniques.</p>	<p>Crime prevention publicity – Deflect offenders; alert conscience; assist compliance</p>	<p>Needs to be positioned in places where people can easily read it – must be in a suitable sized font to be read by all. Can include phone contact numbers for reporting (i.e. crimestoppers) or finding further information about prevention.</p>	<p>Message has an impact over a relatively small area and is dependent on residents/offenders taking time to read message. Unclear messages are unlikely to deter offenders and may increase fear of crime in residents. Potential for negative effect on resident mobilisation/offending when sign/poster is removed (i.e. translated as nothing is being done against burglary anymore). Permission is needed from councils to place signs in public places (i.e. on lampposts).</p>

<p>Media approaches: Newsletters/papers/radio – This involves printing articles on crime prevention schemes and general promoting crime prevention in a number of media. These can include phone contact numbers for reporting (i.e. crimestoppers) or finding further information about prevention.</p>	<p>Crime prevention publicity – Deflect offenders; alert conscience; assist With compliance.</p>	<p>May provide stand-alone effect in discouraging crime or may provide an anticipatory benefit in advance. Can be used to mobilise residents to adopt security measures or to encourage involvement in wider involvement initiatives.</p>	<p>Message or article must be of interest to media. Requires co-operation between prevention agencies and local media</p>
<p>Neighbourhood watch – This involves a group of individuals within one street who form to discuss the current techniques of burglary prevention, pool resources to purchase security upgrades and discuss incidents of burglary and identified burglars.</p>	<p>Stake-holding/public engagement – Deflect offender’s; extend guardianship; alert conscience; assist with compliance.</p>	<p>Useful tool for police and LAs to engage the public. There is evidence that Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) reduces the fear of crime.</p>	<p>Limited to areas where there are motivated residents with an interest in securing their property against burglary . Requires good police/local authority and resident relations.</p>
<p>School awareness programmes – This involves running a mixture of events within schools such as crime prevention theme plays, talks and competitions</p>	<p>Crime prevention publicity – Neutralise peer pressure; alert conscience; assist compliance</p>	<p>Good way to engage with this age group as an early intervention approach – can propagate a prevention message to a large number of potential offenders in a short space of time.</p>	<p>Does require a good relationship between police/local authority and school representatives.</p>
<p>Youth diversion schemes – These are sporting, recreation, (including youth shelters) or peer advice activities which are aimed at reducing the opportunity for committing burglary, preventing drift into crime and giving peer advice on crime prevention and other topics.</p>	<p>Modify offender behaviour – Deflect [potential] offenders; reduce frustrations and stress; neutralise peer pressure.</p>	<p>Combination of this method with outreach work enables hard to reach/engage groups to be engaged with schemes. The is most salient to be carried out in areas where there is a high population of youths and where there is a high probability of drift into crime (due to lack of alternatives, i.e. in deprived wards).</p>	<p>There are some noted problems sustaining such projects over a period of time due to the high resources, both financial and human, which need to go into providing and maintaining such services. Difficulties experienced in targeting those most at risk of drifting into crime as this group is generally hard to engage.</p>

General Domestic Burglary Prevention Advice:

Burglars are opportunistic. They look for easy ways to get in to a home that won't take long or arouse suspicion. Homes that look unoccupied and insecure are more likely to be targeted.

Doors, windows and locks

When replacing a door, it is better to buy a new "door set", the complete assembled frame and door, certified to British Standard PAS 24-1 'Doors of Enhanced Security'.

Make sure doors are solid enough and can't be easily kicked-in.

Windows should be certified to British Standard BS7950 "Windows of Enhanced Security".

Glass panels on or around doors and in ground floor or accessible windows are vulnerable; replace them with laminated glass as it holds together when shattered.

Patio door sliding sections should be raised on the inside and for anti-lift blocks fitted.

Existing patio doors can be fitted with additional security bolts to stop lifting or forced entry.

Mortise locks should be upgraded to 5-lever locks tested to BS: 3621.

Rim locks should be tested to BS: 3621.

Multi-point locking systems should be fitted where appropriate. The lock cylinders should be tested to BS EN 1303 Grade 3.



Around the front and back of your home

Prevent easy access to the back and sides of the house by installing locked gates, 2 metre minimum fencing or walls. Trellis topping also makes climbing difficult.

Security lighting should be used to make offenders feel vulnerable and observed.

Illuminate high risk areas and lines of approach

Fit padlocks and hardware to shed and garage doors.

Securely lock all doors before leaving the house.

Never leave house or car keys anywhere near the front door including your letterbox or where they may be visible through windows

Improve natural surveillance to the front of the house so that a burglar can't work without being seen.

Remove and secure items that may be used to break in or climb up such as ladders and garden tools.

Inside your home

Visibly or forensically mark belongings

Never leave your car keys visible from outside

Doorstep Callers

Beware of bogus callers; use a door viewer and a door chain. Never allow access to unexpected callers

Never discuss your security requirements or existing arrangements with a doorstep caller or salesperson.

Are you at home?

Do not close curtains during the daytime; this can suggest the house is empty.

Use automatic timer-switches to turn on a light and perhaps a radio when it goes dark

If the house is unoccupied for long periods of time, cancel any newspaper or milk deliveries.

Ask a trusted neighbour to clear your post away, or use Royal Mail's "keepsafe" service; they will keep your mail for up to two months.

Ask a neighbour to open and close curtains and park their car on your driveway.

Join a Neighbourhood Watch scheme

Ensure that all doors and windows are locked, set burglar alarm

