

Purpose of the report

This report was commissioned by The Holly Lodge Estate Management Committee (HLEC) in September 2016 to explore residents' concerns about security on the Holly Lodge Estate (HLE), and to identify effective and cost-effective ways to respond.

Introduction

The HLE is a private estate with 279 plot owners whose homes are a mix of detached and semi-detached houses as well as 600 flats, about half of which are rented by Camden Council tenants and the remainder having been sold to private tenants. The plot owners and Camden Council pay an annual contribution to the Estate Management Fund (EMF) for the care and maintenance of the roads, paths, trees, steps, gates, railings, fences, verges, staff accommodation, ornamental gardens, flower beds, drains, and sewers.

In 2014/15 some plot owners on HLE became concerned that the incidence of burglary, theft of and from vehicles and more general anti-social behaviour, including drug dealing and using in public, on the estate was increasing and that HLE was being targeted because of its relative wealth and secluded position. Particular areas of HLE were experiencing more problems than others and certain plot owners requested HLEC to take a more proactive role on crime prevention and security across the estate.

In response to their concerns HLEC trialled a nightly security patrol to check anti-social behaviour at the top of Hillway and Holly Lodge Gardens, promoted Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) schemes, introduced parking cones to discourage parking in areas where anti-social behaviour was reported, installed additional lighting for the park/gardens, arranged a Beat The Burglar event and encouraged residents to use Smart Water to mark their valuables.

Suggestions to increase the fortification of HLE with, among other measures, more cameras and the introduction of automatic number plate recognition, automatic security gates to bar non-resident vehicles, enhanced lighting and security patrols have been made by various plot owners. There have been objections to some of these suggestions on the basis of cost and by plot owners who believe it will diminish their enjoyment of HLE and detract from its sense of community. There is also disagreement over whether HLEC is permitted to take responsibility for security matters or whether its remit is limited to the care and maintenance of the common parts. The issue of HLEC's remit does not fall within the scope of this report.

The report will set out a range of opinion voiced by 14 plot-owners who volunteered to take part in unstructured interviews, over the telephone, about security problems they have experienced and their proposed solutions. The conversations varied in duration between a few minutes to more than an hour. These are anonymously reported and will be divided in two sections. They provide a snapshot of the arguments but only a wider consultation process will produce meaningful data on the popularity of particular views and measures. However, the ideas and suggestions here may be useful when compiling questions for that survey.

Section 1 sets out the views and suggestions of plot-owners who wish to see new security measures introduced while **Section 2** sets out the views and suggestions of plot-owners who broadly object to the introduction of further security measures.

Section 3 includes the incident log of the security patrols during the pilot, and summarises local crime figures and comments provided by PC John Hounsell, Highgate Ward Dedicated Police Officer, Camden Borough Neighbourhood Policing Team. He met the report writer with the Holly Lodge Estate Manager, Barbara Wheatley on 19 October 2016, and sent the updated figures used here in November 2016.

Section 4 contains an extract from “Burglary Prevention in Practice” which is a chapter of the new Handbook of Crime Science, setting out national crime figures for burglary and assessed interventions, well as unpublished research about reducing anti-social behaviour.

Section 5 provides some concluding thoughts and suggestions.

Section 1 Plot owners’ reasons for more security measures to be introduced by HLEC.

Interviewee i

“Round us not much is happening but the problem is more in Holly Lodge Gardens with people hanging about dealing drugs...I am concerned for my children walking by themselves and I think security patrols are a good idea. We’re a private space but we’re not getting the benefit of being private and people (from outside HLE) feel they can do what they like.

We pay a premium to live here so it should be possible to organise better security, and I suggest that we look at whether savings can be made on other things to pay for it.

On drug dealing – I’ve seen big groups, or gangs, of youths walking up the main road probably to sit and drink in the park. I’ve been woken up by the noise but I’ve not seen anyone commit a crime.

In the few years I’ve lived here, I’ve had no problems personally”.

Interviewee ii

“Are we being targeted or is it Camden in general? The view was that stealing from cars, by trying the doors to see if they are unlocked, is becoming so commonplace it isn’t worth reporting. People are getting complacent but it is important to pool information.

At the Beat the Burglar event, the number one recommendation was Neighbourhood Watch. The police can’t make HLE a priority because it’s not the worst in Camden but we have the means to do more for ourselves as a private estate.

Apparently there have been more than 20 burglaries in the past year including my own, and we, as a family, felt violated. We should send a message to burglars that there will be a risk if you steal from us but at the moment there is no risk. Some people think it is menacing to have patrols but it can't hurt if they reduce the rate of criminal activity.

Recently cars with several men inside smoking pot have been spotted parked near the top of Hillway, after dark. Many of the children who live on HLE walk to/from school. In winter that means after dark, so to have drug-taking and perhaps even drug-dealing going on, is frightening. It's not just the illegal activity that's a concern but those individuals in cars are driving while impaired.

To do nothing is irresponsible. When we're away from our home we are anxious about its security. We need to do something to protect ourselves.

Security patrols seem to trigger the most vigorous opposition. Just an idea but perhaps a *Night Watchman* would be more in keeping with the HLE. Someone employed and trained by the estate rather than an independent security firm. The main objection to security patrols is the idea that it will change the "tone" of HLE. So rather than a "menacing" patrol guard with dog, we could have a person just looking out for us at night, reporting anything unusual. And yes, also acting as a deterrent. Most of the incidents occur after normal working hours so Barbara and her team are long gone. Another consideration is cost. Private security companies charge a daily rate of £250+. The night-watchman option would be more cost effective. Perhaps someone on a 10 hour shift (8pm-6am) on a salary of £35,000. Just floating an idea here..."

Interviewee iii

"We have never been burgled but there have been at least 5 burglaries in our street of 18 houses within the last 18 months. That's a high rate. There's anti-social behaviour with youths hanging around in parked cars smoking cannabis or gangs of moped riders. The parking bollards are a help but not a solution. If you ring the police on 101 it can take an hour or more for them to come so that's not a solution either. Personal safety is an issue late at night walking from the bus stop.

The solution is a security patrol. I don't accept the arguments against patrols".

Interviewee iv

"We have not been burgled but having lived on HLE for many years I have a very clear view of what should be done. There is a real problem - well over 20 incidents and not one arrest. We are told it's a low crime area but by comparison to how it used to be, it's a high crime area. The police cannot regularly patrol HLE so we should use some of our reserve funds to pay for security patrols. We don't need 24-hour security but intermittent patrols and if we publicise that we have them, then burglars and anti-social elements are less likely to target HLE.

We need to send a message that HLE is no longer an easy target."

I don't think it's a good idea for a few residents to organise and to pay for patrols themselves because that just gives an excuse for other people not to contribute. However, if the majority of residents don't want patrols, I would accept it. It's important, though, that we communicate to everyone on HLE a clear message about the fact that the police cannot resolve this. Then I think the majority of plot-owners will be of the opinion that something needs to be done."

Interviewee v

We were burgled more than 25 years ago when we had no alarm and recently had an attempted break-in through a back gate but we don't have many valuables and we are not really worried about burglary. We are careful to lock up and have PIR lights outside and never had any thefts from our cars.

We have supported private patrols in the past because of the anti-social behaviour in the summer but we wouldn't want them all the time. I've never seen any evidence of drug-dealing or drug-taking but I am aware of rowdy behaviour which is more than 'normal' teenage rowdiness.

Cost would be a relevant consideration but it might not be that expensive. I wouldn't want it to look like we had 'armed guards' all the time but I think somebody walking around would be ok.

I never noticed the (pilot) patrols and I wasn't aware we had them temporarily. I think improved lighting in the gardens could help and I believe that lighting on the estate generally is at rather a low level and maybe that helps burglars."

Interviewee vi

"There is serious anti-social behaviour occurring on HLE and those who say there isn't a problem (because nothing is happening outside their homes) would feel differently if there were more effective communication about what is going on, and better sharing of the incident log.

The worst problems occur between 11pm and 4 am when young men arrive in cars with their engines running and music blaring. They are dealing drugs and when we called the police on one occasion, they came and made arrests.

The situation improved with the introduction of parking cones but now cars circle around looking for spaces to park. There are incidents of lads on mopeds (with L plates) doing wheelies and in the mornings I believe drug paraphernalia has been found by gardeners.

No one wants to turn HLE into Fort Knox but I suggest the following steps should be taken:

1. ANPR cameras at the bottom of the estate with a flashing warning sign that reads “if you do not have legitimate business on the estate, your number has been recorded and you may be prosecuted for trespass”.
 2. Temporary floodlights at the top end of Holly Lodge Gardens and Hillway so that these could illuminate the miscreants who are parking there. I would only do this if Step 1 doesn't work.
 3. I know other people are keen on patrols but I'd like to try the less aggressive deterrent first (Steps 1 and 2)
 4. Proper communication to all residents of every incident of anti-social behaviour so we can get consensus across HLE for greater security measures.
 5. HLEC should look after HLE in the broadest sense of the word and if it is not appropriate to use existing funds for security, another fund should be established specifically for that purpose
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Section 2 Plot owners' reasons for no further security measures to be introduced by HLEC

Interviewee vii

“I am not at all worried about crime on HLE – it feels and is a very safe place. I walk my small dog at night on my own and never feel unsafe whereas I do on Highgate Hill. I've never seen any anti-social behaviour but I wouldn't be surprised if there was some drug-taking which happens everywhere. I feel the HLE has become quite hostile to young people. Removing benches where teenagers can meet and chat is sad and referring to them as 'gangs' assumes they are up to no good when they are just being normal teenagers. My suggestion is that individuals who are anxious can install burglar alarms and increase their home security. We should get everyone involved in NHW and turn it into a positive force – about being good neighbours and watching out for each other.

Obviously if there are problems of crime and anti-social behaviour, these must be reported to the police immediately for them to deal with. The more stuff that is reported, the more police are likely to do something, and we can ask the police to report back so people feel reassured.”

Interviewee viii

“We are generally “security aware” but have no direct experience of burglary or anti-social behaviour although I have heard the complaints by plot-owners who live in the less populated and less well-lit areas of HLE.

I am not keen on security patrols for reasons of cost”.

Interviewee ix

“We have never been burgled although our car was broken into possibly because there was some loose change in view. Cars do appear to be broken into regularly by ‘chancers’ so private patrols would be reassuring but expensive. My perception is that the risk or threat of crime is not sufficient to justify it. The estate feels very safe to me. People do drive in and park at the top to look at the view or to have a drink/smoke and they are trespassing. Young people infrequently have parties in the park and if they are noisy I would ask them to stop or keep the noise down. My view is that it’s not the HLEC’s role to look after security and I don’t see the point of patrols from the point of view of deterrence because a determined burglar would go where the patrolman isn’t.

People should take responsibility for their own security and call the police if there’s a problem. I am broadly happy with the status quo and what has changed for the better recently is that there is more public information about security and the NHW scheme has been resurrected with a strong framework, and now every street has a coordinator.”

Interviewee x

“We’ve never had a burglary but our neighbours have, and in the summer groups of men from outside HLE were standing around by their cars at the top of Holly Lodge Gardens. It was really bad so we paid for a guy to sit there during the night in the summer and it made a difference. I don’t walk home at night by myself but I basically feel safe. At the end of the day, no one’s been hurt even if they have lost possessions. People shouldn’t feel scared and having a dog is a deterrent. I think patrols are a waste of time but NHW is a good idea and people should become members and ring the police if there’s a problem. It’s a big estate and you need to balance needs and wishes of everyone. The park is a real draw and I don’t mind if residents want to enjoy it so long as they clear up after themselves.”

Interviewee xi

“We were burgled in 1960, 1980 and 2013 but I am not very anxious about security. I have never seen anti-social behaviour personally but I am aware of it from speaking to neighbours. I have mixed feeling about how useful NHW is because all the talking about crime creates more harm than good. The anxiety is disproportionate to the reality and for people who have been burgled, the worry about a recurrence causes more upset than the original burglary. I believe there are two key issues about security patrols.

1. On burglary, patrols would be totally ineffective and I don’t want to live in a place with private security patrols. I don’t want to live in that sort of community, and had I been consulted I would have voted against patrols.
2. On anti-social behaviour, I believe it happens at particular locations at particular times of day and I can see that a private patrol could be helpful but I would prefer the police to be involved. Teenagers drinking in the park or swearing is ok and there should only be intervention with drug dealers. We need to know that it is more than cannabis but I would be worried if there was hard evidence of heroin, for example dirty needles, left in the park.

I am dead against cctv at the entrance or exit and further entrance gate security and I am against more lighting in the park because I believe it is ineffective, disproportionate and intrusive. The danger is we put things into make life more difficult for everyone and don't reduce crime. We live in a lovely area with lovely people and we just have to live with a few nasty ones, and get on with life."

Interviewee xii

"I am not at all concerned about security and often have the door open (off the latch). We've never been burgled though we had some really old bikes stolen from behind our shed but didn't report it because we were stupid to leave them out – and anyway they were just rotting away.

The idea of a private patrol is horrific and we don't want to live in a place with private security patrols. More lighting and pretend cctv could be put in to deal with anti-social behaviour but it was a shame they got rid of the bench (check location?)which was a nice social meeting place. I think benches for people chatting in groups are really nice and there was no evidence of drug-selling as far as I am aware. I would feel differently about 15 people than, say, 4 but I've got teenagers who I tell to "go and hang out."

If individuals want to make their homes into fortresses, then that's up to them but I don't want them to impose it on the rest of the estate".

Interviewee xiii

"We've had one attempted burglary and while my husband has a level of anxiety about it, I don't worry too much. I tend to walk up to the top of HLE in the day but not at night and it seems much the same to me as it was 20 years ago. But after the most recent residents' meeting some people claim there is a dramatic rise in crime and that we are being targeted by criminals. I still believe this is a low crime area and that security patrols for some people are 'a status thing'.

I have practical objections and financial objections to the idea of private security patrols. I don't want to spend my money on them and I don't think they can prevent burglaries but they might make burglars think we have things worth stealing. I would not pay a penny towards them.

As far as anti-social behaviour is concerned, the only time I have experienced it is when I ask people not to park in front of my house and they insult me. I haven't seen drugs or gangs and if I had noisy parties by my home, I would complain to the council but I haven't heard any noise and I feel safe where I am".

Interviewee xiv

"We were burgled a very long time ago – 1980 or thereabouts, had a car damaged and some gardening equipment was stolen from our gardener's van but no problems in the last 10 years.

We are aware that some people have been having problems on HLE but that the police consider it a low crime area. I asked the people affected by the anti-social behaviour at a meeting recently if they had called the police.

In my view it is the police who should be doing something about it. I don't think cameras will resolve the problems and I don't like the idea of patrols with dogs. I don't think it looks very nice for the estate and gives totally the wrong impression".

Section 3 Incident logs from pilot patrols and local crime figures

The incident log of security patrols during the pilot

Security patrols took place from 8pm - 6am for a pilot which was organised in response to plot owners' concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour. The company *Praetorian Guards*, licensed by the Security Industry Authority, was engaged to provide one trained security guard with a van and sometimes a dog, at the cost of £175 per night excluding petrol, paid for out of Estate funds.

The security patrol pilot took place between the following dates and during the shift all incidents were logged by the guard. The following list is taken from the nightly log book entries and comprises a full list of the incidents that were noted. The anti-social behaviour described mainly concerned non-residents loitering in the park or parking vehicles, and on 6 occasions the occupants were using or preparing to use cannabis. One attempted theft from cars was aborted*.

2/9/2015 – 1/10/2015

3/9/2016 patrol talks to a man (non-resident) who says he lost his wallet in park earlier but left after speaking to patrol at 21.30 saying he would return next day

2 guys preparing to smoke weed – patrol removed them from HLE

4/9/2016 proximity light set off by cat, and another by a resident walking his dog

5/9/2016 laughing and shouting heard from park – several youths exited by HL Gardens gate

6/9/2016 patrol escorted 2 youths who were in park on bench drinking alcohol off HLE and also asks occupants of 2 cars in separate locations who preparing to smoke Class B drugs to leave HLE.

8/9/2016 4 youths in parked car – resident called patrol who moved them on

12/9/2016 2 youths in parked car asked by patrol to leave if they are non-residents

13/9/2016 3 youths in parked car asked by patrol to leave

18/9/2016 patrol followed a car "full of guys" which did a U turn and left HLE. Later the patrol spoke to occupants of a parked vehicle preparing to smoke a Class B drug. They left. Spoke to a resident walking his dog at 2am.

19/9/2016 patrol spoke to a driver dropping off a resident.

20/9/2016 1.25am patrol removed a group of youngsters from bottom of Holly Lodge Gardens.

22/9/2016 2 youths in park preparing to smoke Class B to leave HLE – the car had been seen twice before in HLE and noted.

24/9/2016 2 men standing by parked car left as patrol approached

26/09/2016 5 youths in parked car preparing to smoke Class B drug were asked to leave and escorted off HLE at 22.15 3 youths in car driving around HLE at low speed with loud music, left HLE when patrol approached.

30/09/2016 car parked – asked to leave

21/1 – 21/2/ 2016

*2/2/2016 22.30 man attempts to open car doors, succeeds with one – ran as patrol approached him – police called, arrived within 10 minutes CAD number

10/2/2016 police called by patrol re a car on the estate driven by non-residents which had parked up at 1.30am but no arrests. A resident had also called police about patrol vehicle.

12/2/2016 non-resident car parked at 21.39 – patrol asked driver to leave which they did.

19/2/2016 police attended Holly Lodge Mansions for a domestic issue – unrelated to patrol

20/2/2016 a plot owner alerted patrol to a white car in which people were having sex. It had left by time patrol arrived

21/2/2016 youths on motorbikes without helmets drove through estate twice

27/5/2016 – 31/5/2016 - no reports of any anti-social behaviour or incident were logged

The pilot security patrol was not introduced as a result of a consultation process but as a response to fears about crime and anti-social behaviour expressed by a few householders. It is likely that if the patrol was to be introduced on a more permanent basis, a broader consultation of the plot owners would be appropriate and necessary. Some of the arguments in favour and against private security patrols have been expressed by interviewees in Sections 2 and 3. Research on the interventions 4 and 6 (in Section 4) explore the impact of hotspot policing and gated communities.

Local Police Crime figures

PC John Hounsell 120EK is the Highgate Ward Dedicated Police Officer, Camden Borough Neighbourhood Policing Team. He supplied police figures showing the number of offences committed on HLE within a one-year period, and also provided the total offences committed within the Highgate ward in the same period. In order to compare HLE and Highgate ward with neighbouring wards, PC Hounsell provided police crime figures for Hampstead Town, Gospel Oak and Kentish Town for the same crime classifications within the same period.

Police figures can only represent what people report so PC Hounsell cautioned that the crime figures cannot be regarded “a true reflection based on myriad of factors such as lack of reporting, incorrect locations, IT errors etc.” But it is helpful to look at them in the context of Highgate ward as a whole and its three neighbouring wards (out of the total of 18 wards) in Camden for which the same caveats apply. PC Hounsell has detailed records going back to November 2015 when he started to compile them, which provides the one-year picture.

Summary : HLE Crime figures

17 out of total of 114 *burglaries (including attempted burglaries)* in Highgate ward occurred on HLE, 15% of the total.

10 out of a total of 120 *thefts from motor vehicles* in Highgate ward occurred on HLE, 8% of the total.

4 out of a total of 67 *thefts of motor vehicles* in Highgate ward occurred on the HLE, 6% of the total. This figure does not take into account of 3 vehicles that were stolen as a result of burglaries on HLE but they have been accounted for in the risk per household figure below*.

7 out of a total of 109 incidences of *criminal damage* in Highgate ward occurred on the Holly Lodge Estate, 6% of the total.

There are 879 households on HLE (279 plots with houses on them and 600 flats) and the total number of households in Highgate ward is 4,928 (Census data, 2011). Thus HLE households represent 18% of the total number of households within the ward but HLE residents experience fewer than 15% of the burglaries. The incidence of burglary in HLE is 1.9% whereas across the rest of the ward it is 2.3%.

The frequency of other crimes recorded in HLE (theft of and from vehicles and criminal damage) is lower than would be expected both in terms of population and household numbers, so the risk to people living on HLE is lower than those faced by people living outside HLE but within other areas of the Highgate ward.

HOLLY LODGE ESTATE

Population 2,000 (approx.)
Households (HH) 879

Nov 2015 – Nov 2016	Police crime reports	Annual risk per HH
BURGLARY	17	1.9%
THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE	10	1.1%
THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE	4+3*	0.8%
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	7	0.8%

HIGHGATE WARD (HW)

Population 11,675
Households (HH) 4,928

Nov 2015 – Nov 2016	Police crime reports	Annual risk per HH
BURGLARY	114	2.3%
THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE	120	2.4%
THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE	67	1.4%
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	109	2.2%

GOSPEL OAK WARD

Population 12,190
Households (HH) 4,933

Nov 2015 – Nov 2016	Police crime reports	Annual risk per HH
BURGLARY	126	2.6%
THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE	43	0.9%
THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE	34	0.7%
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	73	1.5%

HAMPSTEAD TOWN WARD

Population 12,066
Households (HH) 5,385

Nov 2015 – Nov 2016	Police crime reports	Annual risk per HH
BURGLARY	108	2.0%
THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE	121	2.2%
THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE	30	0.6%
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	62	1.2%

KENTISH TOWN WARD

Population 14,510
Households 5,807

Nov 2015 – Nov 2016	Police crime reports	Annual risk per HH
BURGLARY	125	2.2%
THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE	58	1.0%
THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE	42	0.7%
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	143	2.5%

Section 4 National Crime Statistics for burglary and an academic assessment of interventions that might have positive impacts on burglary.

The following is an extract from the chapter on burglary written for the Routledge Handbook of Crime Science, due to be published in June 2017, and is reproduced by kind permission of the authors, Professors Bowers and Johnson from the Department of Security and Crime Science at The Jill Dando Institute, University College London.

Burglary Prevention in Practice

Kate J. Bowers and Shane D. Johnson

The section is still in draft form for the Handbook and should not be quoted or published elsewhere.

Introduction

Burglary attracts universal public concern. Within their lifetime most people will have either experienced it first-hand, or know someone who has within their immediate social circle. Although now rather out-of-date, the most recent estimates for the cost of burglary in the UK (Duborg and Hamed, 2005) suggest a total societal cost of £3,268 per incident at 2003/04 prices. In addition to the costs associated with dealing with a burglary (e.g. securing entry points, replacing stolen items and so on), when burglary happens there are emotional consequences - 81% of burglary victims surveyed in the UK in 2013/14 said they were emotionally affected by the incident (Office for National Statistics 2014). For this reason the public have healthy (and sometimes disproportionate) concerns about becoming victims of burglary, and are (in anticipation of victimisation risk) willing to spend money on target-hardening their properties against it. For example, for many years the British Crime Survey (now the Crime Survey for England and Wales) has included questions about respondents' level of worry about becoming a victim of crime. The 2013/14 survey demonstrated that 11% of the national sample of respondents stated that they had a high level of worry about the possibility of a burglary (Office for National Statistics 2015). Whilst not restricted to burglary, in a geographically focused survey, 43% of Londoners in 2010-11 reported their quality of life was affected by fear of crime (Gray, Anderson, Smith, & Davies, 2013), demonstrating the reach of such issues to people's everyday lives. There is also evidence that households currently spend more on physical security measures than they did 10 years ago. For example, between 1995 and 2013/14 the proportion of households in the UK with burglar alarms rose from 20% to 30%; those with dead locks from 70% to 82%; those with light sensors from 39% to 55% and the number with window locks from 68% to 89% (Office for National Statistics 2014). The prevention of burglary is therefore big business and a major element of the private security sector.

The problem of burglary and burglary risk factors

The Office for National Statistics, (2015) reports that the current prevalence of burglary according to data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales was 3% (for the year ending March 2015). The average risk of experiencing a break-in across the UK is therefore objectively not very high. Similar levels of risk are observed in many other (but not all) countries. For example, analysis of burglary data across 26 countries collated for the International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS) revealed an average prevalence rate of 2.81% (with a standard deviation of 1.88) for a series of survey sweeps spanning the period 1989 to 2005 (Tseloni et al 2010). A further key trend in burglary, is, like most crimes, there has been a noticeable decrease in levels of victimisation over the last twenty years. This trend is commonly termed the 'international crime drop' and has been observed for a number of key crime types and across many countries (e.g. Tseloni et al 2010). For burglary in the UK, this has manifested as a drop in risk to the degree that households are now three times less likely to be burgled than they were in 1995 (when the prevalence rate was 9%).

There are a number of different explanations for this decline in crime, including an increase in the standard and uptake of private security measures (Farrell et al 2011). This is an encouraging general trend which currently looks set to persist. However, it is important to consider that levels of risk show considerable variation across different targets and contexts. Many studies have demonstrated the concentration of burglary risk on particular targets. A rather historical- but compelling- illustration of this was provided by Budd (2001) who, using data from the British Crime Survey regarding burglary victimisation over the previous 12 months, found that just 1% of households experienced 42% of the burglary problem. Such concentration of burglary is an international phenomenon; using ICVS data, Tseloni et al (2010) demonstrate a fairly constant level of burglaries per victim (1.2-1.25) over the period 1988-2004. What this illustrates is that some houses are *repeatedly victimized* within a given period of time. Researchers have invested considerable effort in understanding this phenomenon and a number of findings and theories have consequently emerged. Key empirical findings suggest that the risk of burglary increases following a victimisation, and that if a repeat burglary does take place, there is a disproportionately high probability that a second incident will follow swiftly after the first – often within the first few days of an initial incident (e.g. Polvi et al 1991; Johnson et al., 1997). Repeat burglary victimisation is also more likely to happen in certain types of geographical areas. For example, using police recorded crime data from Merseyside (UK), researchers have demonstrated that levels of repeat burglary victimisation (RV) were higher in crime ‘hotspots’ (Bowers and Hirschfield 1995) and in areas with higher levels of social and economic deprivation (Johnson et al 1997).

Bowers and Johnson researched the effectiveness of a range of interventions reviewing evidence on the effect, mechanism, moderators, implementation and economics of these interventions. They also rated the comprehensiveness of the evidence on each intervention.

Below is a summary of the interventions which are of most practical use for HLE.

1. Individual level target hardening –improving physical security at individual households

Reduces the risk of individual (re) victimisation. BCS data from 2005/6 suggests that households where there were no home security measures were almost ten times more likely to have been victims of burglary than those with only simple security measures. This includes upgrading security measures such as locks, windows and doors, which increases the effort associated with gaining unauthorized entry to houses. Deadlocks on doors and window locks substantially reduce the risk of burglary (2.1% of those with these measures were burgled compared to 19.4% of those who did not among 2005/06 BSC respondents). The evidence also suggests that those with security measures, including burglar alarms, sensors and security lighting are more likely to suffer from an attempted burglary than they are a burglary with successful entry. Those that have been recently burgled are more likely to act on advice to target harden. The quality and settings of the upgrades matter- it is unlikely that new locks on flimsy doors will deter burglary. Where installed to prevent repeat or near repeat victimisation, implementation should be swift. For alarms, the false alarm rate should be considered. One American study in Charlotte found a false alarm rate of 98% (LeBeau and Vincent 1997). Costs can vary; those that need it the most might not be able to afford it.

2. Individual level Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design - Improving visibility and increasing signs of occupancy at individual homes

Has been reported to reduce the risk of individual re-victimisation but may not on its own affect area crime rates. Closely related to neighbourhood watch schemes. The actual and perceived risk of apprehension can be increased by improving surveillance by cutting back shrubs and modifying fences. Perception can also be manipulated by making properties look occupied; changing curtain positions. Lighting and noise can help and reducing signs of empty properties (removing mail, moving bins, cutting lawns). Changing natural surveillance could reduce burglary in certain types of houses at certain times only. Coupe and Blake (2006) find townhouses with less cover were actually more at risk at night time. Those that have been recently burgled are more likely to act on advice given. The quality of work to improve surveillance and the frequency and extent of measures to increase signs of occupancy will influence the outcome. Where done to prevent repeat or near repeat victimisation, implementation should be swift. Costs can vary; substantial changes to fencing and foliage (which can be a recurrent cost) is likely to be most expensive

3. CCTV Cameras may be fixed or redeployable

In the Systematic Reviews, for every 100 crimes, 16 were prevented using CCTV. The review notes that outcomes were usually measured for violent crime and vehicle crime. No separate analysis was reported for property crime. Armitage et al. 2002 examined the impacts of CCTV on burglary and found it to reduce in areas of implementation. CCTV can reduce crime in a number of ways; deterring criminals by increasing the perception or actual risk of getting caught, encouraging the use of areas for legitimate purposes or increasing community involvement in areas, changing victim behaviour or supporting effective deployment. CCTV works best of all for vehicle crime. It has a modest effect on property crime and no overall effect on violent crime. It also works better in certain settings; it is more effective in the UK than the US and it appears to be more effective in the suburbs of cities. Cameras vary in their technical specification - some are able to record incidents better than others. Most successful CCTV systems involve active monitoring of footage. Private CCTV for residential households is likely to be expensive. In an evaluation of 7 CCTV programmes in the UK, Gill and Spriggs (2005) found 4 schemes to be cost-effective, with the other 3 not being so.

4. High visibility police and hotspots policing

Hotspots policing appears modestly but significantly successful at controlling crime problems. There was no evidence of crime displacement to other areas. Only a few studies have examined burglary (e.g. Braga and Bond, 2008). These suggest small but positive effects. Hotspots policing involves the deployment of police patrols to specific geographical areas. The idea is that if victims and offenders are prevented from interacting in space and time through the presence of formal guardianship, crime can be prevented. This intervention may also have a deterrent effect by increasing offenders' perception of the risk of apprehension. Hotspots policing appears to be more effective for drug offences, violent crime and disorder than property crime. Studies using Problem Orientated Policing approaches are found to be twice as effective as those that just involve increased police patrols. Two-officer patrols have few advantages over single-officer patrols and use much more resources (Blake & Coupe, 2001). Challenges include officer redeployment/ availability; officer resistance; lack of accountability; short intervention periods and variations in community reactions. The deployment of additional front line officers is likely to be expensive. Costs can be reduced by using police volunteers, community officers, or other agencies to increase guardianship (see Fielding and Jones, 2012).

5. Improved Street Lighting

Lighting reduced crime by 21% in areas receiving intervention compared to control areas. It appears to be effective for property crime and violent crime. However, it should be noted that in a national evaluation of reductions in lighting, Steinbach et al. (2015) recently found that changes to lighting such as part-night lighting and dimming had no effect on crime, including burglary. Improved street lighting might reduce crime by increasing natural surveillance as a consequence of increasing visibility and street usage, or by demonstrating investment in the neighbourhood and consequently increasing community pride and the desire to improve the area. Evidence suggests that the latter is more likely because street lighting does not significantly reduce crime at night-time. This is also compatible with recent evidence that dimming or turning off lights overnight appears to have no overall effect on crime (Steinbach et al., 2015). Street lighting schemes appear to work particularly well in the UK in contrast to the US. They also appear to have a greater effect on levels of property crime than they do on violent crime. Where they have been observed, reductions in crime are not specific to or significant for night-time crimes. Little is known apart from the suggestion that it is important for there to be a 'marked improvement' in lighting conditions. The quality and appearance of the (lamp)post and the type and quality of the light (e.g. luminosity levels) are separate considerations. There can be adverse effects such as light pollution, sleep issues and energy use which should be considered. Evidence is very limited - although where costs have been assessed it appears that street lighting is cost-beneficial.

6. Street closures/ Reducing traffic and 'gated communities'

Clarke (2005) reviewed a number of schemes that closed streets. In nearly all cases, there was some evidence of crime reduction. He notes that the quality of the evaluation research designs varied and that those with positive effects were more likely to be published. In some cases, there were also signs of displacement to other areas and a return of the problems when streets were re-opened. There is no clear systematic evidence on the effectiveness of 'gated communities' although they tend to make residents feel safer. Research has demonstrated a positive relationship between accessibility and levels of residential burglary. Closing streets and reducing traffic plausibly could reduce accessibility and increase effort to those looking for opportunities; it could also decrease offender knowledge of available targets. Unlike *Secure by Design*, street closures are retrospective changes to street layouts. Development of a 'gated community' is a physical design strategy that simply restricts access to outsiders by only providing access to residents. The effort to offenders should therefore be much increased. This can involve producing "fortress societies" where communities are gated and security guards, cameras and alarms are employed. Little is known about where street closures are likely to work. They have been effective in the US and the UK. They have been shown to be effective at reducing different types of problems including burglary, prostitution, drug dealing and violent crime. Street closures have been introduced in a range of different types of areas including residential neighbourhoods, downtown areas and prostitution strolls. Eliminating pedestrian paths has been effective in some conditions. Implementation is likely to involve changes to public rights of way that can cause delays and complications in implementation. In some studies it was noted that street closures are often undertaken alongside other measures such as crackdowns, neighbourhood watch and target hardening. There are also potential drawbacks such as the creation of ghettos, displacement of traffic, increased difficulty in resident access and harm to businesses. Gated communities are more common in some cultural settings than others. For example, there are a large number of such communities in parts of the USA and South Africa. One possible consideration is that such communities might make police response and patrol more difficult. Gated communities are likely to be expensive to set up and will have on-going maintenance and staffing costs.

7. Publicity campaigns

There is some evidence that publicity specifically related to crime prevention activity can have a crime reductive effect and can be used to enhance or prolong the impact of interventions. Generic publicity campaigns regarding victimisation risk rarely change behaviours. Publicity aimed at offenders is likely to work by increasing the perception of risk and/or effort. Victim-orientated publicity appears less effective but could work by leading to self-initiated target hardening which would also increase the actual effort involved in offending. Publicity associated with crime prevention tactics can have a crime reductive effect of their own. In these situations, publicity might be advertising the use of covert techniques or crackdown campaigns. Consideration needs to be given to the timing of publicity. For example, there are opportunities to publicise crime prevention operations before, during or after activity on the ground. It is possible that there could be benefits at all these stages. Publicity has the advantage that in general it is cheap. However, it can often be seen as an 'add on' and can be an unexpected cost associated with other measures.

8. Repeat Victimisation Strategies/ Predictive policing approaches

Once a property has been burgled its chances of subsequent victimisation increases, as does that of neighbouring properties. Strategies to reduce this risk include increasing the effort associated with offending by target hardening recent victims and their neighbours, and increasing guardianship through police patrols or "Cocoon Watch", whereby the immediate neighbours of recent victims are advised of the elevated risk they face and asked to look out for each other. The virtual cocoon that is formed by alert neighbours around the burgled home can increase the likelihood that an offender will be caught if they return to the property. Target cocoons rather than general "neighbourhood watch" schemes appear to work best.

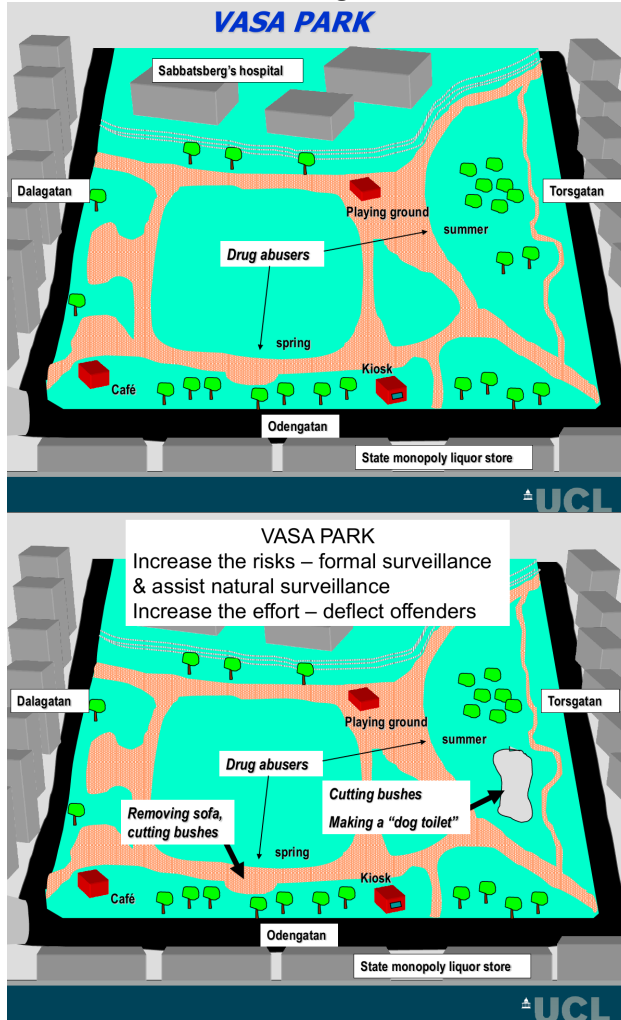
9. Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and cocooning

The effect of intervention is difficult to estimate since neighbourhood watch schemes are usually implemented alongside other interventions, such as target hardening. NW is likely to have a greater impact when residents are home during the day and, crucially, in combination with other measures. It may be difficult to maintain community interest over time. Better evidence is necessary to estimate the impact of neighbourhood watch on crime. Considerable variation in effectiveness is seen in different contexts. US and Canadian schemes appear more effective than UK based ones. There is a huge variation in terms of the size of schemes - from cocooning schemes with 3 residents to US schemes covering 30,000 households. There is a suggestion that the type of neighbourhood (e.g. affluent or deprived) is of importance to the outcome. Current wisdom suggests that combining NW with other activities (e.g. property marking) works best. Schemes differ as to whether they are public or police initiated. There is also variation in terms of who runs the scheme - often it is a street 'captain' who reports to an area co-ordinator who then liaises with the police.

10. Property marking

Evidence on the effectiveness of property marking is mixed. In a similar way to neighbourhood watch, it seems to work best in combination with other interventions. It appears to have more potential to prevent crime than to increase the detection of stolen goods. This measure reduces the anticipated rewards of crime by making marked property harder to dispose of or easier to return to owners. However, any impact may be due to associated publicity and changes to offender perception of risks. In reality, property marking in itself does little to deter offenders from breaking into a house or stealing marked property from within it. There are different forms of property marking and there is also the practice of recording personal property. Recent figures from the UK show that 31% of households have employed such methods. Taking photographs of items, marking items with a UV pen, and recording serial numbers are more commonly practiced than using a visible marker. Different forms are likely to differ in effectiveness but this has not been evaluated.

For anti-social behaviour in a park by drug users, there is unpublished research from Stockholm. Vasa Park's problem with anti-social behaviour was reduced by removing benches and trees, increasing the risks of both formal and natural surveillance and deflecting offenders by making it less easy and comfortable. The research on this initiative was undertaken by Johannes Knutsson, a colleague of Professors Bowers and Johnson.



Section 5 Concluding thoughts and suggestions

Domestic burglary has fallen steadily over the past twenty years. The most reliable source is the Crime Survey of England and Wales which is based on consistent measures of people's experience of crime and is not subject to issues around reporting to police or changes to recording standards and updated definitions. The 'crime drop' that was referred to in **Section 4** resulted in a fall from 9% of homes being burgled each year in 1995 to the current rate of around 3% (for the year ending March 2015).

Most burglaries and attempted burglaries in HLE are likely to be reported to police so it seems reasonable to assume that current police figures are fairly robust. According to figures provided by PC John Hounsell, the Highgate ward experiences fewer than average burglaries and attempted burglaries (2.4% compared with a national average of 3%) while the HLE figure is 1.9%.

In other words, people living on HLE are less likely to experience a burglary or attempted burglary than elsewhere in the Highgate ward, and are about one-third less likely to be victimised than the national average.

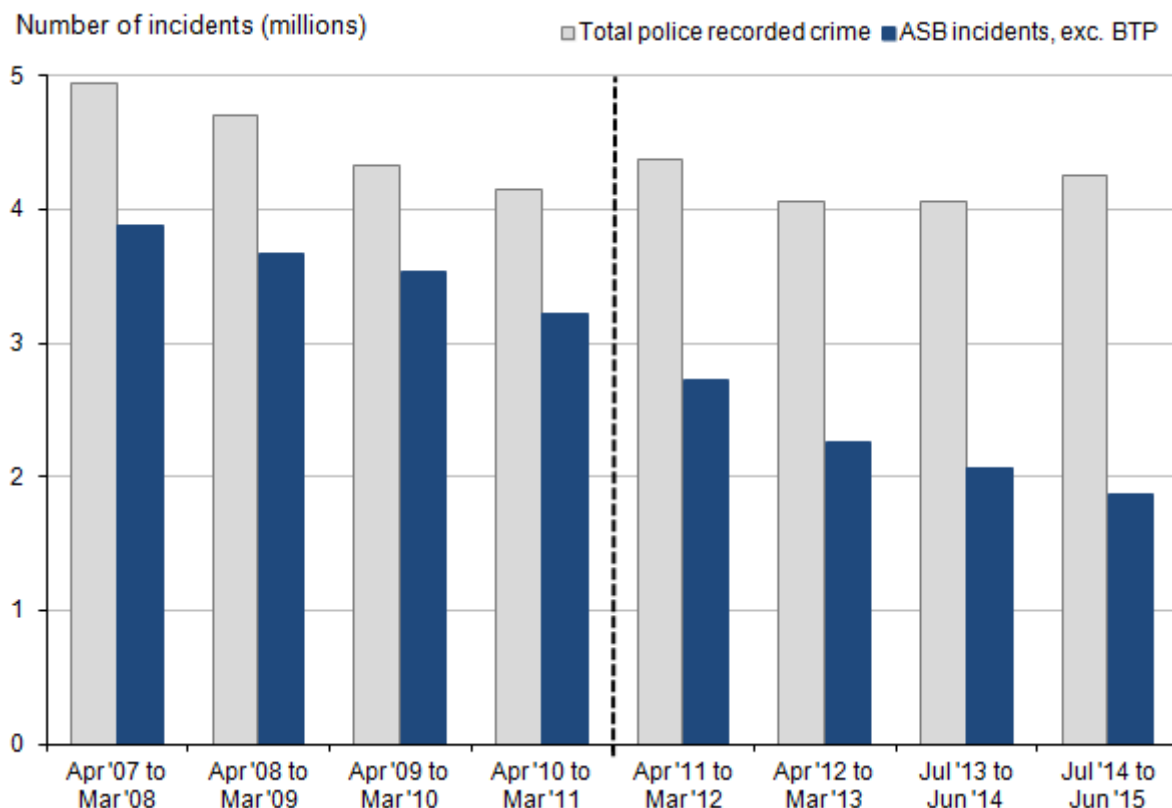
The prevalence of theft from motor vehicles on HLE also seems to be lower than the local or national average.

However, the finding that HLE is a relatively low crime area does not necessarily mean that individuals will not feel anxious about it. Over the past few decades there have been two important discoveries which put 'average' crime figures in perspective. The first is that crimes like burglary are not evenly distributed among populations, or even among individual estates. Some properties are targeted repeatedly whereas other appear to be exempt. The second is that so-called "fear of crime" (which often includes anger or outrage about it) is keenly felt by some more than others. Any calibrated response to burglary or car theft needs to focus on those who have been victimised and on those feel distressed and frightened, not just those who feel immune.

Moreover, anxiety is not synonymous with victimisation. An important lesson from the Crime Survey of England and Wales is the disturbing effects of anti-social behaviour (ASB) – that is, conduct that can be inconsiderate, disruptive and even frightening but which is not necessarily illegal, or is so borderline that police are unlikely to act.

The number of ASB incidents recorded by the police in the year ending June 2015 decreased by 9% compared with the previous year, continuing a downward trend.

Figure 16: Police recorded crime and anti-social behaviour incidents in England and Wales, year ending March 2008 to year ending June 2015



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office / ASB incidents: years ending March 2008 to 2010 - National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA); year ending 2011 - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC); from year ending March 2012 onwards - Home Office

Notes:

- Police recorded crime and ASB incident data are not designated as National Statistics.
- Following a different approach to recording ASB incidents data, figures from year ending March 2012 onwards are not directly comparable with previous years; Chapter 5 of the User Guide has more information.
- ASB incidents exclude British Transport Police.
- Unless otherwise stated, the data on this chart refer to crimes recorded in the financial year (April to March).

The challenge for HLE is to what extent those who are relatively unconcerned are prepared to act on behalf of those who are troubled by crime or anti-social behaviour on the estate.

The priority for those who feel vulnerable is to do what they can, reasonably, to protect themselves. Some of the 10 different burglary prevention initiatives discussed in **Section 4** (namely 1,2, 3 and 10) are those which individuals can implement without needing their neighbours' cooperation or consent.

There are also important, if obvious, ways to reduce vulnerability to vehicle crime such as removing valuables, parking where the car is visible, and being sure to lock it. (Despite stories about hi-tech scanners that defeat vehicle security, many cars are inadvertently left unlocked; this is one of the drawbacks to locking by remote control.)

An important question which is not addressed by this report (although it was discussed with interviewees and must remain confidential for obvious reasons) is the extent to which those who feel most at risk have taken all the precautions that might reasonably protect them.

Having said that, one of the most important features of a harmonious community is the extent to which residents are prepared to come together and act in concert when some of their number feel threatened. This is particularly so for ASB where, simply for reasons of location, some households feel more vulnerable than others, and the police are less likely to take action. Perhaps the best way of approaching the issue is to list – and ultimately rank – potential responses. Actions which can be taken by individual households include “target hardening” such as enhancing physical security, improved locks and secure-glazing, visibility (such as cutting down hedges so passers-by can see if anything is untoward), or lights, CCTV and warning notices.

In addition, there are many options for the wider community which have been discussed. Some of these may seem restrictive and elitist, such as closing off the estate to create a ‘gated community’; but others can be more subtle. They include:

1. Community CCTV, which should be high-definition and could include monitoring options or automatic number plate recognition (ANPR).
2. Neighbourhood Watch with warning signs, property marking and communal warning notices
3. Improved lighting
4. Enhanced traffic calming, perhaps including street closures

More active interventions could include volunteer patrols. These are not the same as vigilantes; they can be of the highest quality collaborating with police like the Community Security Trust (CST). However, for this to be effective it requires training and long-term commitment.

Some residents would go further and propose hiring private security patrols. These have become established in areas of Holland Park, St John’s Wood and Belgravia. One drawback is that many households oppose the idea in principle, for the same reason they dislike the idea of a gated community. Also, private security is expensive – perhaps £78,000 pa or £1,500 pw for one person patrolling with a van at current rates, and some residents have indicated they would refuse to contribute on principle while others might freeload.

A compromise suggestion has been made to have a member of staff recruited by HLE to assist in the management of Neighbourhood Watch and to be involved in cocooning activity around anti-social behaviour. That person might work during the evenings/nights rather than during the day and operate as a night watchman on behalf of the whole community. It would only provide 5/7 the cover of a commercial security patrol but would be less than half the cost and could be trialled for a six-month period.

In the interests of community cohesion, a consultation exercise is suggested. This could set out various preventative options with costings and invite every plot owner to respond.



Police advice

PC John Hounsell urges people to call 101 for non-urgent problems and advised that police patrols are influenced by the number and location origin of 101 calls.

When should I use 101?

- You should call 101 to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response. For example, if:
 - Your car has been stolen
 - Your property has been damaged
 - You suspect drug use or dealing in your neighbourhood
- Or to:
- Give the police information about crime in your area
 - Speak to the police about a general enquiry

You should always call 999 when it is an *emergency*, such as when a crime is in progress, someone suspected of a crime is nearby, when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened.

John Hounsell can be contacted by email on John.Hounsell@met.pnn.police.uk with particular or sensitive intelligence that you want him to act upon, but in the normal course of events it is sensible for the NHW co-ordinator to manage email referrals to him.

Sarah Caplin

24 11 2016