



JDiBrief - Analysis

Repeat victimisation: CASE STUDY (4 of 5)

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APPLICATION: Knowledge relating to reducing repeat victimisation (RV) and near-repeat victimisation (NRV) have been widely applied in many industrialised countries. Here we provide one example of where the Trafford Borough of Greater Manchester Police systematically integrated these principles into their burglary dwelling reduction activities.

The first step in the analytical process was to produce weekly 'risk maps' which captured the heightened risk of victimisation of burglary dwelling following an initial incident. This focused on the space and time patterns in burglary.

Police and partner agencies then used the risk maps to focus crime prevention activities at key places and times that were highlighted.

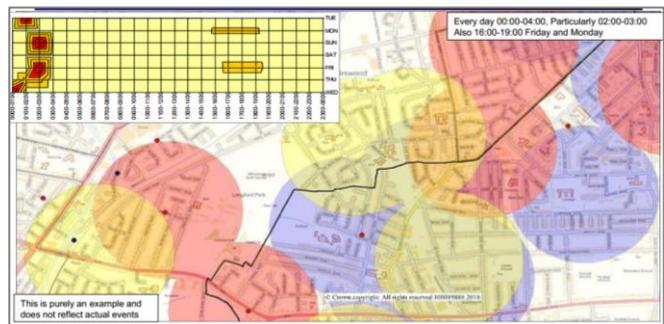


Figure 1 – 'Risk maps' produced of RV and NRV

To minimise the risk of RV a crime prevention officer visited the burgled property within 12-24 hours to perform a security audit. The main aim of this was to identify vulnerable features about the property and initiate immediate action to address these (e.g., improving locks, fitting timer switches to lighting). These situational responses were undertaken to send a signal to the offender that the house is occupied and it is riskier to break. This is believed to deter future victimisation.

Other crime prevention activities included tasking Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) to deliver door-to-door messages to residents in areas identified as being at a greater risk of NRV. These were done verbally where possible and swiftly (preferably within 24 hours) after an initial incident. Crucially, this message had three components to it; informing, reassuring and advising residents. The aim here was to minimise the heightened risk of NRV by providing relevant information that resonated with residents. This was believed to be more likely to empower residents to respond by taking some responsibility themselves to minimise their future risk by applying practical crime prevention measures.

In the first four months of using this approach to reducing burglary dwelling in Trafford approximately 45% of messages were delivered verbally. When there was no answer PCSOs either returned later or asked a neighbour to pass on the message. It was believed that the frequent presence of uniformed police officers in the area acted as an extra deterrent to offenders operating in the area.

RESULTS: Neighbourhood policing team Inspectors welcomed the focused (and intelligence-led) approach to responding to burglary dwelling incidents in their area. Post-activity analysis of crime data showed that burglaries had reduced by 27% in the first year of following this approach. It should though be noted that this was a continuation of an already decreasing trend in burglary dwelling. An additional benefit seems to be that the levels of public confidence in Trafford have improved greatly since the adoption of this crime reduction strategy (see Resources section on this topic for further details on these activities and results).