



08 Jun 2023

Crime Operations

National Policing News

Police now attending scene of every home burglary

All police forces in England and Wales are now attending every home burglary after a pledge to roll out the policy nationally

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) today confirmed the move [following a historical commitment made last year by all police chiefs in England and Wales](#), informed by research on the most effective way to tackle burglary. The evidence shared by the College of Policing set out how rapid police attendance at scenes can increase victim satisfaction, help with investigations, and prevent future crimes.

The NPCC and the College wrote to the Home Secretary to inform her of the new standards and the decision of

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In response to our request, the Home Office Counting Rules for burglary have been changed to split the existing classification of residential burglary into two components - residential burglary of a home and residential burglary of unconnected building and to retain a separate sub-category to cover burglary in business and commercial properties. This has brought greater transparency to crime recording for offences of burglary, and better reflects the way in which police forces across England and Wales prioritise their approach to such offences.

Chief Constables have been working at pace to ensure that this commitment could be fulfilled as soon as practically possible, and we are now able to confirm that all forces in England and Wales have been implementing this policy since March.

National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Burglary, Deputy Chief Constable Alex Franklin-Smith, said:

"I am pleased that all forces are now able to fulfil the commitment made last year by police chiefs to attend all residential burglaries.

"Although the fulfilment of this commitment is a milestone in itself, it is only the first step. We want to be bringing more offenders to justice, we want to be gathering more evidence, and we want to be improving detection rates. We expect to be judged on the results the public see.

"The changes to Home Office Counting Rules is also welcome, and I thank the Home Secretary and colleagues in government for their support in introducing these changes.

"Burglaries are an insidious crime. They do not just involve the loss of personal possessions, which in itself is very distressing, but they are also extremely invasive and can make people feel unsafe in their own homes.

"The number of burglaries is at an all time-low, down more than 50 per cent over the past decade, but we are not complacent. We will continue to prioritise preventing these offences, targeting repeat offenders and organised crime groups and solving as many burglaries as we can."

Home Secretary Suella Braverman said:

"Burglary is an awful crime which must be tackled and that's why I am delighted to see that police forces across England and Wales have fulfilled their commitment to attend all domestic burglaries. This will help increase public confidence and see more

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Chief Constable Andy Marsh, CEO of the College of Policing, said:

"Burglary is a particularly traumatic crime which impacts deeply on the way individuals feel about their own home, personal safety, and security.

"The commitment is a necessary and welcome step towards regaining and improving community trust by returning to the fundamentals of policing. It will enable police officers to get more of the basics right and help lock up offenders.

"It will make forces more accountable within their own communities, bring more consistency to our responses to burglary, and help to improve detection rates. Policing should be able to deliver more of what the public rightly expects of it."

Association of Police Crime Commissioners Chair, Marc Jones said:

"We welcome the prompt action taken by police chiefs to implement this policy across all forces.

"Burglary is an incredibly invasive crime and as Police and Crime Commissioners we have been engaging with all policing bodies on this issue as we know how important prioritising action in this area is to the public.

"Changes introduced to the way in which burglary is recorded is also a significant step in ensuring we are transparent with the public and are representing the true nature of crime occurring in our neighbourhoods.

"I want to thank the Chiefs for their swift action to implement this policy. This is a positive step towards regaining public confidence in this area and in bringing more perpetrators to justice for this crime which affects so many."

John Hayward-Cripps, CEO, Neighbourhood Watch Network said:

"Our own research shows that burglary is number one crime that people are concerned about (two thirds 66% of respondents - Crime and Community Survey Nov

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properties less attractive to criminals, sharing information about attempted thefts and looking out for those vulnerable residents who are at risk cannot be under stated."

Examples of proactive work to tackle burglary

West Mercia Police

'**We don't buy crime**' initiative is a collaborative community approach to tackling burglary and other acquisitive crime. Local residents in parishes signed up to the scheme are offered a SmartWater forensic property marking kit with signs displayed on main routes in and out of the town/village advising criminals the local community has taken crime prevention steps.

Local police attend community events and carry out house visits, to encourage people to sign up to the scheme, they are offered a free property marking kit, crime prevention advice and encouraged to register with West Mercia Police's local news alert system, Neighbourhood Matters. Launched in Cleobury Mortimer in 2015, the initiative receives funding from West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner and has since been rolled out in towns across the region. It has also been adopted by other police forces.

We Don't Buy Crime now has five key strands along with towns and villages, police work with second hand stores and fuel stations, deploy covert tactics, and look at ways local communities can help tackle associated harm including criminal exploitation and vulnerability.

Northamptonshire Police

The number of home invasions across Northamptonshire has reduced by over 50% and commercial burglaries have gone down by nearly 60% since Northamptonshire Police's dedicated burglary team was launched three years ago.

Operation Crooked is the Force's campaign to reduce burglary - a focus for Northamptonshire Police since Chief Constable Nick Adderley joined in 2018.

As part of the operation, two Burglary Teams covering both the north and west of the county, sit within CID, and they ensure that every burglary victim in Northamptonshire gets a visit from the police.

In the past three years, the team have also worked on driving up the quality of investigations, managing and progressing forensic hits more quickly, hunting down wanted people, organising police patrols in areas of concern and gathering intelligence to prevent burglaries before they happen.

Since April 1, 2019, when Operation Crooked was launched, home invasions have reduced by 50.9%. This equates to approximately 2500 fewer victims per year.

Commercial burglaries have also gone down too with a reduction of 59.2% in the past three years, equating to 1299 fewer victims.

And victim satisfaction levels are the second highest in the force at 79%, just behind domestic abuse.

West Midlands Police

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This activity has seen a reduction in burglaries across the force area.

North Yorkshire Police

A 'Burglary Summit' was held recently with officers and staff from departments across the force who work together to tackle burglary. The bespoke training covered detailed best practice in responding to burglaries with input from specialist teams and videos of recent burglary victims to further highlight the impact a burglary has on those affected. It also demonstrated that the way the police handle an incident has a significant impact on how safe communities feel going forward.

Greater Manchester Police

In Summer 2021, Greater Manchester Police volunteered to work with the Government to evaluate the benefits of sending a police officer to every domestic burglary across Greater Manchester. Following this, the force developed Operation Castle – a forcewide response to tackling burglaries.

The operation has been very effective and in the last 12 months to April 2023, burglary has reduced by 11.1% with solved burglaries increasing by 62.2%. The proportion of solved outcomes has nearly doubled in this time.

As well as enforcement activity, there is also work being done to improve crime prevention and providing bespoke advice related to each specific incident. For example, if a victim of burglary has had their lock burnt and their car stolen, the force would provide advice around putting the keys in a faraday pouch and installing lighting around the doors where the locks have been burnt.

In April, the force held an 'Operation Castle Seminar' – a learning event for officers and members of staff, with local and national partners also in attendance. The seminar focused on best practice in responding to burglaries with inputs from a number of experts in the field. As part of the event, officers and staff also heard from a victim of burglary - who attended the seminar alongside his wife, and gave an emotional account of when his family home was burgled and the positive response that he received from GMP.

Surrey Police

Surrey Police has recently launched a 'Suspicious activity portal' which allows local communities to quickly and easily upload CCTV, doorbell camera or dashcam footage of anything strange or out of the ordinary they might have spotted in their local area. The portal is for circumstances where no crime has been reported, but the suspicious behaviour could potentially be related to a burglary, theft of a vehicle, or catalytic converter, for example. Where a crime has been committed, the public are asked to report it using the online reporting tool via the Surrey Police website.

<https://surrey.police.uk/suspiciousactivityportal>

Lancashire Police

Lancashire Constabulary runs Op Defender, a force wide campaign funded by Lancashire's Police and Crime Commissioner to crack down on residential burglary. Op Defender aims to locate and arrest offenders, take positive action to reduce residential burglary through crime prevention advice, and to safeguard and support victims of crime, keeping them at the heart of investigations. Op Defender sees crime prevention advice leaflets, calling cards and property marking kits from SelectaDNA to support those who may be at risk of, or have been a victim of burglary.

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Steps you can take to help prevent burglary

- Keep all doors and windows locked when your property is left unattended.
- If you're spending time outdoors in the garden, make sure your front door is kept locked.
- Don't give burglars anywhere to hide! Lower fences at the front of your property, around one-metre high are preferable to high fences as they allow for a clear view over the top and don't provide cover for anyone wishing to hide.
- At the rear and sides of a property, taller fencing is recommended to prevent easy access.
- Trellis, thorny plants, or a suitable anti-climb topping such as plastic spikes make it difficult for anyone climbing over a fence or gate.
- Planting prickly or barbed shrubbery along boundaries and fence lines acts as an effective natural barrier.
- Gravel driveways and paths will make sure you hear anyone approach.
- Consider an accredited burglar alarm system with audible alarm boxes mounted high at the front and rear of your home. Two visible audible alarm boxes are better than one. Mount them at the front and rear of your home, high up to resist tampering.
- External lighting is a good deterrent and is recommended at doors as it makes it safer for you when coming and going after dark.
- A clear, low white light that activates at dusk to dawn is ideal for lighting a yard and garden and allowing any person to be clearly seen.
- Check to make sure that trees and plants do not obscure your lighting. It's recommended that you regularly cut vegetation back.
- Inside your home use an automatic plugin time switch to operate a lamp or light at pre-set times when you're away.

Contact information

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