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Developing Crime Reduction Plans:

Some Examples from the
Reducing Burglary Initiative

Liz Curtin, Nick Tilley, Mark Owen and Ken Pease

Crime Reduction Research Series Paper 7

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“The views expressed in this report are those of the authors, not necessarily those of the Home Office (nor do they reflect Government policy).”

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Crime Reduction Research Series

The Policing and Reducing Crime Unit (PRCU) is based in the Research, Development and Statistics (RDS) Directorate of the Home Office. The Unit carries out and commissions social and management science research on policing and crime reduction, to support Home Office aims and develop evidence-based policy and practice.

The Crime Reduction Research Series presents research findings and guidance material relevant to practitioners involved in crime reduction at the local level, and particularly the local crime and disorder partnerships. The series will include work funded under the Government's Crime Reduction Programme as well as other relevant RDS work.

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Foreword

This report has been designed as a guidance document for practitioners and local policy makers seeking external funding to tackle crime. It emerged from a number of development visits that PRCU made to three crime and disorder partnerships to help them draw up local burglary reduction plans. These plans were later submitted to the Home Office as part of the second round of the Crime Reduction Programme's Reducing Burglary Initiative (RBI). Round Two involves around 160 projects being funded and monitored by the Home Office, following the intensive evaluation of 63 Strategic Development Projects (SDPs) under Round One.

This report describes the stages involved in preparing a crime reduction project plan, providing examples, where relevant, from the three areas studied. Each area displayed different burglary problems and this enabled various kinds of analysis to be undertaken and interventions to be adopted.

It is hoped that the report will provide useful, practical guidance to those involved in preparing crime reduction plans.

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Executive Summary

The Crime Reduction Programme (CRP) increases the opportunity for local crime and disorder partnerships to win central government funding to tackle crime. The CRP has many facets, focusing on burglary (Reducing Burglary Initiative [RBI]), targeted policing, CCTV, national initiatives (designing out crime), early interventions in the lives of those at risk of offending and domestic violence. The examples in this report refer explicitly to burglary although much of what is described can be applied to all types of crime reduction.

This report has been produced as a guidance document for all practitioners and local policy makers planning crime reduction projects. The lessons were drawn from demonstration projects with three partnerships in order to generate burglary reduction plans. Each area exhibited differences in terms of geography, socio-demographic make-up and the nature of offending.

The main sections of the report are presented in the order in which you might expect to find them in an exemplary crime reduction plan.

Identifying populations at high risk

Populations at high risk of crime can be defined in terms of geographic or 'virtual'¹ communities. Geographical communities may be easier to define as computer systems can be set up to extract data on the basis of geographic units, to which census and crime data can be fitted relatively easily. The disadvantage of basing crime reduction plans on geographic communities is that individual households at high risk within geographic areas of lower risk are disregarded. Alternatively, virtual communities enable groups defined in non-geographic terms to be targeted. The process in one project area described in the report focuses on the elderly and those living in houses of multiple occupation (HIMOs). However, the difficulty here is estimating the number of households within the virtual community so that burglary rates can be calculated.

Analysing the problems within high risk populations

Data quality

Analysts rely heavily on police records for information on crime even though they may be used in conjunction with other data systems. Data quality varies by force: common weaknesses include errors in the coding of incidents, inconsistent spellings of names and places and inaccurate postcode information. Police crime data therefore needs to be examined carefully, undertaking the necessary 'cleaning'. This is particularly important for the analysis of repeat victimisation where accurate, consistently recorded address data is imperative.

¹ A community that is defined by features other than a common geography, e.g. the elderly, students, etc.

Analysis

A crime will only occur when there is a capable and motivated offender who finds a suitable target, without anyone or anything there to keep the two apart (Felson, 1998). Using these three ingredients, a useful starting point for analysis is to think about what is actually allowing the crime to occur within the high-risk group. The answers to these questions will become evident from the data as various hypotheses are tested. Some hypotheses will be erroneous, yet others will prove to be valuable insights.

The analyses undertaken in the three project sites showed, in part, the following:

- Seasonal variation in patterns of mode of entry: a large number of burglaries from insecure premises tended to occur in August, whilst from October to December there were more burglaries from forced entries.
- High rates of repeat victimisation (within three months) in postcodes that had suffered more than one burglary.
- Burglaries tended to be concentrated on one side of the street with odd numbers (1, 3, 5, etc) suggesting perhaps, that situational crime prevention measures, at those most critical sites, would be most appropriate.

Moving from analysis to strategy

A strategy is more likely to emerge as a cohesive, workable document if the key players, i.e. analysts, policy-makers and practitioners work together. Many tasks are complementary - as the analyst tests out the practitioner's hypotheses, the policy maker can decide on a prevention strategy based on the analysis. The best strategies will be those that pay attention to the results of analysis, that attempt to understand how crime will be reduced and that employ mutually advantageous interventions that are ordered in a sequential fashion. Interventions should ideally be interactive (e.g. crackdown and consolidation), avoiding approaches that conflict or would be detrimental to the success of others (e.g. target hardening and covert detection methods employing tracking devices on the same households).

Defining aims, objectives and targets

The approach adopted in the structure of this report is to define the interventions *before* clarifying aims and objectives. While we would agree that this does not conform to standard text book lessons of project management where interventions follow from (previously determined) aims and objectives, it worked best for us in the particular projects we examined. It may not suit all project styles. Moreover, we also felt that developing our interventions first would help clarify the project rationale.

Aims, objectives and targets set out what the project is planning to achieve in terms of 'outcome'. The aim outlines the project's overall rationale, e.g. to reduce domestic burglary in [name of town/ward/beat, etc]. Project objectives in this study described how the aim was to be achieved by adopting crime reduction theories that were translated into interventions. For example, this could mean increasing natural surveillance in order to increase the risk of detection, in effect, changing X to achieve Y. If suitable interventions have been chosen, they should fit relatively easily into the objectives. Outputs and milestones serve to quantify how the intervention will be applied over time, acting as measurable activities against which project progress can be assessed. For example, an output may be to establish eight Neighbourhood Watch schemes in an area over 12 months; the related milestone would be to set up two schemes per quarter. Targets should cover the short, medium and long term, and should be reassessed at frequent intervals depending on the life of the project.

Project monitoring

Monitoring is more likely to be effective if projects are kept simple, with clear stated aims, objectives and outputs. It is easier to assess whether a project is fulfilling its overarching aim if it is utilising quantifiable measures such as outputs and targets.

Monitoring progress is an important part of the project management process. This can lead to 'tweaking' interventions where necessary and being open to emerging lessons. The project manager is central to the monitoring process, both in terms of generating crime prevention ideas and choosing the relevant data sets being collected. He or she has a key role in making sure that the system of monitoring does not become blurred by the adoption of multi-agency working. Collecting consistent monitoring data can be difficult where projects involve a wide range of participating agencies. It is vital therefore that, at the outset, roles (for all members of the project team) are clearly defined at both an individual and agency level.

Achieving sustainability

Projects funded for a finite period are often felt to limit the potential for sustainability. Examples of improving sustainability include incorporating good lessons into mainstream practice and investing in comprehensive security upgrading, avoiding 'short term fixes'.

Developing an action plan

A clear action plan that sets out how the project will be delivered needs to be drawn up once targets have been set and provision for monitoring has been made. Charting the key project stages, working out slack project time, delegating particular areas of work to the project team and creating an activity network (i.e. the 'critical path') are all important tasks. The action plan should also place the interventions in a logical order, by working out how short, medium or long term work interacts. For example, target hardening may produce early, tangible results that will boost confidence where as offender based schemes are more likely to lead to crime reduction in the longer term.

Costing interventions

Estimates should be made regarding the overall costs of the project along with the costs per month/quarter.

Overall costs

Two kinds of cost should be included here, both those using existing/redirected resources (internal) and those requiring additional resources (external, e.g. RBI funding). Existing resources should indicate as full costs as possible, including staff time. Estimates for purchasing equipment/services should also be included in the costings plan.

Costs per month/quarter

Overall costs should then be broken down into months/quarters so that project spend can be monitored. This also allows project under/overspend to be identified.

Taking time to prepare a funding bid

In the context of this study, the modal figure for bid preparation in the three areas was 15 working days.² However, such preparation will depend greatly on the quality and availability of data, the expertise of the analyst and any procedural complexities for agreeing the bid.

² This is to be taken as a measure of activity time required rather than a chronological sequence.

Contents

Foreword	(iii)
Acknowledgements	(iv)
Executive summary	(v)
List of tables	(xi)
List of figures	(xii)
List of boxes	(xiii)
1. Introduction	1
2. Identifying populations at high risk	3
Geographical communities	3
Virtual communities	3
National risks	4
Getting data on rates	9
3. Analysing the problems within high risk populations	11
Data quality	11
Analysis	12
Offenders	13
Victims/Targets	15
Locations	20
Analysis software	21
Analysis presentation	21
4. Moving from analysis to strategy	22
The analysis – getting it done	22
A ‘model’ strategy	22
Examples from strategies A and B	24

5. Defining aims, objectives and targets	27
Defining the project aim	27
Defining the project objectives	28
Setting up outputs and milestones	29
Setting a target percentage reduction	29
Performance Indicators	31
6. Project monitoring	32
Assessing Progress	33
7. Achieving sustainability	34
8. Developing an action plan	36
Timescales	36
9. Costing interventions	38
10. Taking time to prepare a funding bid	40
11. Plan preparation checklist	41
12. Conclusion	42
References	44
Annex	46

List of tables

1.	Distribution of domestic burglaries and combined burglary rate by Enumeration District, Project Area A	5
2.	Risks of domestic burglary by household type	6
3.	Burglary rate of sheltered accommodation in Project Area C, by number of units and location	7
4.	Combined burglary rate: each area combined with those more victimised - sheltered accommodation, Project Area C	9
5.	Ages of offenders committing burglaries in Project Area A	14
6.	Sex and age of recorded victim in Project Area B	15
7.	Distribution of domestic burglaries by post code in Project Area A	17
8.	The burgled side of the street in Project Area B	19
9.	Burglary by month (24 months) in Project Area A	19
10.	Method of entry in Project Area A	20
11.	Quarterly expenditure profile by Project Area	39

List of figures

1.	Time between repeats: Project Area B	16
2.	Cumulative percentage of same postcode burglaries in Project Area A	18
3.	Project plan stages	23

List of boxes

1.	Some elements of the proposed strategy in Project Area A	24
2.	Some elements of the proposed strategy in Project Area B	25
3.	Setting up Neighbourhood Watch (NW)	29
4.	Market reduction	29
5.	Targets for burglary reduction in the three project areas	30
6.	Methods of sustainability	35
7.	Suggested time taken to prepare a bid	40
8.	Bid preparation checklist	41

The aspiration of the Crime Reduction Programme is that policy and practice should come to be evidence based. Funding for the programme was made available following a review of research on methods of reducing crime (Goldblatt and Lewis, 1998). The evaluations being undertaken within the programme will improve the evidence base, helping to inform future work and policy. Crime reduction is focused in that each contributing project must demonstrate that a significant crime or disorder problem is being addressed, and that the problem has been analysed, using data, to inform local responses.

A previous report (Tilley et al, 1999) has described experience during the first round of Strategic Development Projects (SDPs) aiming to reduce burglary. This report tries to apply some of that experience to the preparation of a project plan for reducing domestic burglary and is particularly relevant for those partnership based local schemes aiming to reduce victimisation. The principles should still apply to planning initiatives even when they are not needed as a condition for external funding through the CRP.

The following discussion draws on three project plans, in whose development PRCU worked with local agencies, making use of data that were available locally.

The three project sites, referred to from here on, as areas A, B and C, were chosen because they encompass a range of presenting contexts and problems. These areas were invited by the authors to develop analyses and proposals in advance of a series of burglary reduction seminars in Autumn 1999 for those who had submitted expressions of interest for Round 2 of the Reducing Burglary Initiative (RBI). The purpose was to allow participants in the seminars to draw upon experience of those similarly placed.

The general approach adopted is more important than the specific contents. Even with regard to burglary, the precise nature of the analysis and the strategies developed will be tailored to local circumstances. As Tilley et al (1999) emphasised, the burglary problems in the SDPs varied and the variations called for differing responses. The plans divulged here extend the range of burglary problems addressed by the CRP. Clearly, the full range of ways in which high burglary rates are generated or can be addressed has not yet been exhausted in the programme.

The order of the following discussion takes the reader through the process of developing a plan. The following sections are outlined:

- Identifying populations at high risk.
- Analysing the nature and source of the burglary problem faced.
- Devising a strategy to reduce the problem.
- Defining aims, objectives and targets.
- Project monitoring.
- Achieving sustainability.
- Costing interventions.
- Preparing an action plan.
- Estimating the time needed to prepare a plan.

Where possible, extracts from plans will illustrate what can be done.

2.

Identifying populations at high risk

There are two main ways of identifying populations at high risk. One obvious and convenient method of doing so is to scan geographical areas. Alternatively, there may be 'virtual communities' within an area, i.e. those not defined purely in geographical terms.

Geographical communities

Applications to Round 1 of the RBI stipulated that the target area should cover between 3-5,000 households, and that all households in that intervention area should be included. As local computer systems are most adept at extracting data on geographical units, this will often be the easiest way of identifying burglary problems. The disadvantage of this approach is that individual households at high risk lying within geographic zones of lower risk are overlooked. This is particularly relevant for forces and Basic Command Units (BCUs) where no geographic area crosses the threshold of eligibility for central funding.

When geographical areas are used to define high burglary risks, existing administrative units such as wards or beats will usually be the most convenient method of counting households and offences. However, these administrative units may not necessarily make sense on the ground. What may be considered a natural (relatively homogenous) community may not coincide with those geographic boundaries that have been defined for administrative purposes. Bid A focused on a geographical area that was neither ward nor beat based. Instead, it covered a bounded and intelligible area on the ground. The area was roughly rectangular. It had major streets on three sides and a canal on the fourth. The bid covered parts of two beats and crossed historical divisional boundaries, though with reorganisation in that force, these are being united. Geographical Information Systems (GIS), allowing the allocation of incidents to particular addresses, maximised the flexibility with which areas could be defined, and patterns analysed (Wiles and Costello, 2000). Generally, Small Area Statistics (with census data at enumeration district level), the Postcode Address File and addresspoint data can be used to allocate incidents and provide counts of potential targets in given geographical areas.

Virtual communities

Tilley et al (1999) highlighted the existence of "virtual" communities of individuals sharing common socio-demographic characteristics but who did not necessarily live within a tight geographical location. An example of such a community identified by Tilley et al (1999) was students, who may be highly victimised regardless of where they live in a town or city.

In Rounds 2 and 3 of the RBI, although areas had to have suffered from a burglary rate above the national average (twice the national average in round 2 and one and a half times the national average in round 3), there were no requirements regarding the size of the proposed area. Bidders could now consider targeting particular groups, defined by demography, living arrangements or the like. Virtual communities may be spread across a number of wards or beats. For example, one of the Round 2 projects targeted students as a virtual community, in whichever of four police beats they lived. Although these 'communities' are geographically dispersed, their risks of burglary turn out to be shared and interventions can be applied accordingly. Other such vulnerable groups may include the recently moved and those living in houses of multiple occupation.

There are, however, a number of problems associated with focusing on virtual communities, which mean they are by no means an easy option when selecting a target group for a crime reduction initiative. These include the following:

- Finding members of virtual communities so that they can be targeted.
- Knowing denominators (i.e. household counts) by the variable which defines the virtual community, so that burglary rates can be calculated.
- Orchestrating responses, where services are delivered on a geographical basis.

For example, if a virtual community of students living anywhere in a certain city was to be targeted, one would need to be able to identify *how* student households had been burgled within the relevant area and identify how many student households there were overall in that area. One would then need to develop a response that could be delivered across that city.

However, although defining a virtual community may not always be a straightforward process as highlighted above, the effort expended on identifying a virtual community is not wasted effort. Finding a common denominator that makes people more heavily victimised is a good step towards solving the problem.

National risks

Selecting geographic communities

Most analysis is likely to be geographical as this is the type of information which is most likely to be readily available (both in terms of number of burglaries and number of households). Table 1 shows the numbers of burglaries and numbers of households in the Enumeration Districts (ED) making up the area covered by Bid A.

Table 1. Distribution of domestic burglaries and combined burglary rate (over 31 months) by Enumeration District, project area A

Enumeration District	Households	No. burglaries	Rate per 1000
01ACFE01	181	67	370
01ACFE06	205	60	293
01ACFE10	169	41	243
01ACFE04	180	38	211
01ACFE03	228	46	202
01ACFE07	190	29	153
01ACFE12 (part)	188	24	128 *
01ACFE09	217	23	106
01ACFE02	206	16	78
01ACFE05	220	16	73
01ACFE14 (part)	206	15	73 *
01ACFE08	186	10	54
01ACFE11	218	5	23
Total	2594	390	150

* Burglaries cover only part of the ED, the rate is therefore underestimated

Burglary reduction initiative areas, that are geographically defined, will always include sub-areas with varying rates. The sub-areas that made up Bid A, for example, varied substantially in the rates of burglary suffered, as shown in Table 1.

In selecting an area as the focus of attention, it makes sense first to identify the target community or neighbourhood. The relevant statistical units (beats, ED's, wards) can then be aggregated to calculate an overall rate for the area concerned. Overall rates are often calculated for the purposes of meeting specific funding criteria; for example, applicants to round two of the RBI were asked to show that the burglary rate (in the target area as a whole) had for the previous three years been twice the national average. Aggregating sub-areas, however, does not imply that interventions should be uniformly applied. Rather, within-area differences may form the basis for targeted action, based on the relative risk of each individual sub-area. In sum, though variation may be crucial in deciding on where to focus intervention measures, it is not as relevant for target area identification.

Selecting virtual communities

What kinds of virtual community might it be profitable to analyse locally for risk rates? Table 2 shows the risk of burglary to households belonging to different groups, setting the national risk to 1³. Thus, for example, when the head of the household is between sixteen and twenty-

³ These figures were calculated from British Crime Survey data. Budd, (1999).

four, burglary risks are 2.71 times the national rate, as set out in the table. It should be stressed that the data in Table 2 represent prevalence, not incidence. It counts houses burgled, not burglaries. Since, in general, those burgled once have a higher risk of being burgled again, the figures in Table 1 are an underestimate of the relative risks suffered by different household types. Thus, if local figures behave roughly as national ones do (and where there is no reason to suppose that they will not), simply selecting for local attention household types with a relative risk of two or over, could yield local rates that are well above average.

Table 2. Risks of domestic burglary by household type

Household is....	Relative risk
Head of household 16-24	2.71
Home has no security measures	2.71
Home in an area with high levels of physical disorder	2.14
One adult living with children	2.00
Head of household is unemployed	1.80
Respondent resident for less than one year	1.75
Head of household is single	1.73
Home is privately rented	1.73
Head of household is economically inactive	1.70
Respondent is Asian	1.68
Head of household is separated	1.63
Household is not insured against theft	1.54
Home in inner city	1.52
Household income is under £5k per year	1.48
Home in a council estate area	1.45
Household has no car	1.38
Head of household is divorced	1.38
Home in north (NE,NW, Yorks, Merseyside, Humber)	1.38
Respondent is Afro-Caribbean	1.34
Flats	1.29
Unoccupied overnight for more than one month in previous year	1.29
Terraced houses	1.18
Home on main road	1.18
Home left empty during weekdays for 5+ hours on average	1.11

Table 2 merely identifies nationally vulnerable groups. Local experience should yield more candidates. The following is a sample of other virtual communities, who in at least some circumstances, appear to be at heightened risk.

- Those recently victimised
- Students
- Residents over shops
- Those living in or near some types of hostel
- Those about to move home
- New tenants
- Holiday caravans while unoccupied
- Holiday houses while unoccupied
- Known offenders
- Houses in Multiple Occupation (HIMOs)
- The mentally disordered or vulnerable

Local areas may not reflect national patterns. Bid C focused on elderly people living in small sheltered accommodation developments. They were found to be at high risk, notwithstanding the nationally lower than average burglary risk faced by older people. The suggestion from this area was that the crucial factor was the grouping of vulnerable victims. Table 3 shows the

Table 3. Burglary rate of sheltered accommodation in project area C, by number of units and location

Location	No. of households	Rate/1000 households	
A	19	105	Above x2 national average
B	21	95	
C	21	95	
D	32	94	
E	57	88	
F	23	87	
G	78	64	
H	35	57	Below x2 national average
I	23	43	
J	27	37	
K	58	34	
L	39	26	
M	150	26	
N	124	24	
O	218	23	
P	105	10	

rates experienced in the individual sheltered housing units. The top eight exceed twice the national burglary rate⁴ (the rate required for Rounds 1 and 2 of the RBI). The criticism may be made that the numbers are small and that intervening may seem inappropriate in such cases. However, the alternative of leaving unprotected small groups of households at truly high risk seems untenable.

Table 3 showed that eight of the places in Area C's sheltered accommodation example, yielded rates in excess of the critical burglary level,⁵ whilst eight did not. This did not mean that the initiative should have been restricted to the eight in excess of the critical level. The situation was no different from that in Area A, where again only about half the geographically based sub-areas exceeded twice the national rate. What mattered was the aggregate.

Table 4 shows the overall rates for increasingly larger areas within Project Area C. Locations A and B⁶ together have a combined rate of 100 burglaries per 1000 households. A, B and C combined have a rate of 98 burglaries per 1000 households. Looking much further down the table, location I and all areas with a higher rate, have a combined rate of 78 per 1000.⁷

Table 4. Combined burglary rate: each area combined with those more victimised, sheltered accommodation, project area C

Location	Cumulative rate per 1000 households
A	105
B	100
C	98
D	97
E	93
F	92
G	84
H	80
I	78
J	74
K	69
L	65
M	55
N	50
O	43
P	40

Above x2 national average

Below x2 national average

⁴ Based on a national rate of 27 burglaries per 1,000 households (1997 figures).

⁵ Twice the national average at 54 burglaries per 1,000 households.

⁶ Locations A, B and C refer to areas within Project Area C, and do not refer to Project Areas A, B and C.

⁷ The cumulative rate is calculated by dividing the total number of burglaries in your sample by the total number of households and multiplying by 1000. For example, the cumulative rate of the first three EDs listed in Table 1 is 168 (67+60+41)/555 (181+205+169) x 1000 = 303.

Table 4 also shows that the combined rate fell below the critical level with the inclusion of location N. Thus, under Round 2, the eligible 'virtual community' of vulnerable sheltered housing would exclude locations N, O and P.⁸ In practice, the rates of victimisation in two of these areas was not much less than in M, and local practice was to include the remaining areas.

Cumulative rates can be calculated for both geographical and virtual communities. Although not imperative when designing burglary reduction initiatives, they are useful in raising the threshold of 'borderline' areas (e.g. locations N, O and P, Table 4) and thereby maximising coverage. Without calculating a cumulative rate in project area C, for example, only eight areas out of sixteen would have been eligible for funding (Table 3). However, when the rates were combined, thirteen areas fell within the critical level (Table 4). By organising the locations in order of decreasing rates of burglary, the biggest bid possible was produced that was still twice the national average.

Getting data on rates

One of the reasons for using standard geographical areas for finding high burglary populations is that census data and crime data can be fitted to it relatively easily. It can otherwise be more difficult to calculate numbers of burglaries, and numbers of potential victims. Unless crime records specify a defining feature of risk (or can be adapted to do so, e.g. by including a 'students' category on a crime report) it will be hard to provide counts of offences fitting a conjectured at risk category.

Census data can assist. They provide not only counts of households by ED. They can also provide counts of those with a variety of risk relevant attributes within EDs, including age, household composition, ethnicity, and occupational status. Clearly though, in some areas, where change is rapid, the census may cease to provide reliable estimates. The local authority may have data on other base counts, for example, registered HMOs, number of caravans, sheltered accommodation residences, recently arrived tenants and types of accommodation. Local colleges and universities may have data on student residences. Health Authorities may have data on nurse residences. And so on. In many cases, imagination and effort may yield a good enough count of those potentially at risk even where they are not defined in terms of a common area of residence.

Police records vary in the range of victim attributes that may be collected, the proportion of cases in which those attributes are recorded and the accuracy of officers' returns. This will put limits on what can be achieved in providing counts of burglaries committed against specified populations. Even where fields are not entered conscientiously, some analysis of risk may, however, be possible. For example, if only 50% of crime reports note the occupation of the householder, the distribution of victimisation amongst those where records are kept can still be

⁸ The rate under round 3 was reduced to 36 burglaries per 1,000 households and under this criterion, all locations could have been included.

calculated. Provided there are no grounds for believing that there is a bias in relation to those households where occupation is noted, the figures can be extrapolated to all domestic burglaries. If base counts can be made, rates can then be calculated.

A resource intensive search can be performed if denominator data is good at household level, but police data is not. Relevant addresses can be looked for in crime reports where the target group live. Victims in Area C's sheltered accommodation were found using this method, however, it was (and is), very time consuming.

In some areas, local crime surveys may supplement what can be achieved with administrative data to identify groups at abnormally high risk.

3. Analysing the problems within high risk populations

Data quality

Whatever other data systems are used, police records will invariably have to be called on. The partial reporting and recording of crime are well recognised. Nothing can be done about this problem in the short time during which plans normally have to be prepared.

It will be important to be sensitive to other potential difficulties in police data. These vary by force, but few, if any systems will be without problems of some kind. The analyst needs to look carefully at the data and at how they are recorded to work out the limits to their use, to flag up major uncertainties, and to undertake necessary 'cleaning'.

There follows a selection of common weaknesses:

- Errors in the coding of incidents
- Flexible interpretation of incident categories
- Inconsistent spellings, of places, names, stolen property and MOs
- Mistaken postcode information
- Rough victim age estimations
- The inclusion of duplicate incidents
- Partial addresses
- Inconsistent/erroneous descriptions of housing type
- Inconsistent/erroneous descriptions of tenure type
- Latest time of incident coming before earliest time
- Fields containing a combination of elements that need to be analysed separately
- Missing data in many fields
- Inconsistent use of fields
- Miscoding of the area
- Reorganisation of data systems, meaning that no trend data are readily calculable
- Nominal values placed on items of property stolen
- Incomplete listing of items

For the analysis of patterns of repeat victimisation, which will normally be worth doing, it will be necessary to have accurate, consistently recorded address data. In some cases, systems

will be in place to check the data and to prompt corrections where needed. In Area A, for example, postcodes were checked automatically. Quite a large number were initially incorrectly recorded, but checking them ensured that postcode based analysis was undertaken with confidence. Even when there are automatic data checks there is still a chance that fields will be completed inconsistently. For example, flat numbers where there are block names may be put under either house number or flat number. It is important to check and correct.

Some estimates of data robustness can be made by looking at repeat victimisation, when the address data has been cleaned. The consistency of victim names, ages/dates of birth, housing types, tenancy types etc, can be checked. For example, in one data set examined, dates of birth were taken and examinations of repeat incidents showed these to have been consistently recorded in every case. In another data set, only rough age estimates were given.

Looking for repeat crime numbers can identify and weed out duplicate incidents. We found that as many as 6% of recorded incidents in one data-set examined were duplicates. Including these will potentially mislead with regard both to overall rates and to counts of repeats.

Data on offenders are usually rather sparse, in part because of low clear-up rates. It is prudent to avoid uncritical generalisations from known offenders to the population of all offenders.

Analysis

Analysis is always partial. What can be done is confined only by the imagination of the analyst and the thinking of those feeding into the analysis. There is never time to do all the analysis that might, in principle, be done. Choices, therefore, have to be made to get the best out of the data. Though there are standard frequency measurements that can easily (and quite usefully) be routinely undertaken, analysis confined to this will be rather limited.

We have referred already to a range of ways in which we might think of looking for populations of high-risk households. Beyond this, how does one decide on ways to interrogate the data? The following have been found useful:

- Talking to those with a good working knowledge of the area/population in question, to elicit from them hunches about what might be significant in making them vulnerable. In Area A, we convened a group comprising residents, housing managers, beat officers, neighbourhood officers etc, who were able to produce a rich, varied and at some points contradictory account of some of the area's crime problems. These could be put to the test.
- Being aware of literature on crime patterns. Much is summarised in Hough and Tilley (1998a), with references to readily accessible publications.

- Walking round the area, looking at the households in the population deemed at risk and thinking about what may be putting them at high risk.
- Playing with and getting a feel for the available data.

What will emerge from these sorts of exercises are hypotheses or conjectures about the crime problem. One practitioner was offended at his views being referred to as 'conjectures'. He thought he was being accused of mere speculation. What mattered were facts, and he felt he had them. It is important, though, to have hypotheses. The facts are used to test the conjectures. Well-tested conjectures provide a sound basis for planning an initiative. Some of the common sense ideas heard in our meeting in Area A proved to be quite erroneous when we examined the data, but they were nevertheless helpful in shaping the analysis.

One good starting point for analysis is to think about (and get others also to think about) the 'ingredients' for burglary and how they are brought together amongst the high-risk group. A burglary needs a capable and motivated offender to find a suitable and accessible target, in the absence of anyone or anything there to keep the two apart (Felson, 1998). If there is something or someone to keep the offender and victim apart, if the potential target is inaccessible, or if there is no motivated or capable offender, then a burglary will not occur. Another way of getting ideas is to 'think thief' (Ekblom, 1997), that is to try to envisage how a thief looks at the area and makes choices about which properties to focus on, how to get in and out, what to steal and how to dispose of it.

The following section addresses these three ingredients in crime chemistries; offenders, victims/targets and locations, and draws together some analysis from the project areas in answer to some of the questions posed. A brief explanation of the types of analysis software and of the importance of analysis presentation is then given before moving on to the fourth section, 'From analysis to strategy', where attempts are made to design relevant interventions on the basis of the analysis undertaken.

i. Questions about offenders and offending in relation to an identified population at risk, might include:

- What proportion of the burglaries are being committed by prolific offenders and what by occasional ones?
- How persistent are the prolific offenders over time?
- How does the offender know about, find, or encounter the target?
- How does the offender get away?
- How does the offender dispose of stolen goods?
- How many offenders are involved in the commission of each offence?

- How do the offenders learn how to commit burglary?
- How do they pick target dwellings?
- How do they decide what to steal?
- How are the burglaries committed?
- Are the burglars specialists in domestic burglary or are they generalists?
- How far do the burglars travel to commit their crimes, and how do they get to burglary locations?
- Are there special needs lying behind the decisions to commit burglaries?
- Are there distinctive attributes of those committing the burglaries?
- Are the burglars using special MOs?

Analysis of offenders in Area A

Relatively little could be gleaned from looking at the offenders in Area A. The clear-up rate for domestic burglary is in most places low. Here, it stood at 13%. Table 5 shows who the known offenders were, in relation to the cleared offences. It shows that the large majority were cleared to those in their twenties. They were all male. Twenty-five of the detected burglaries were committed by those living locally, 12 were committed by individuals whose given address was a prison, and 20 by those of 'No Fixed Abode'. Only two had an address outside of the area altogether.

Table 5: Ages of offenders committing burglaries in project area A

Age of accused	No. offences	Percent
16–19	2	4
20–24	20	35
25–29	26	46
30–34	4	7
35–39	2	4
40–44	2	4
45	1	2
Total	57	102⁹

There may be scope, in developing bids, to do more to debrief offenders admitting burglary, asking questions of the sort suggested in this paper. There may also be opportunities to make use of 'softer' data derived from intelligence. This might include systematically asking victims who they believe to have committed crimes against them, and using the rate at which repeat names are given to estimate the degree to which the local problem is one of prolific offenders¹⁰.

⁹ Column exceeds 100% due to rounding up of percentage figures.

¹⁰ The British Crime Survey finds that of those incidents in which the victim could provide information about the offender, almost a half were committed by complete strangers, 17% burglaries involved offenders known casually by the victim, and 34% offenders well known to the victim (see Budd, 1999).

An alternative data source may be the probation service where information may be held on the numbers of offenders living in an area with a pre-conviction for burglary. Data agreement protocols should exist to make this information available, at an aggregate level, to outside agencies.

ii. Questions about targets/(re)-victimisation might include:

- Is there anything distinctive about the attributes of the households being victimised, for example age, sex, ethnicity or mental state of householder, recency of moving house, closeness to void properties, tenancy patterns, physical attributes of dwellings?
- What goods are being stolen?(note earlier point about property data)
- At what rate is victimisation a precursor to re-victimisation, and what time elapses before re-victimisation?
- What is the degree of similarity in the method, time and goods taken between re-victimisation and original offence?
- Are there distinctive time patterns (by time of day, day of week, week of year, recency of victimisation, recency of victimisation nearby)?
- Is there a distinctive pattern of MOs?
- Are MO's associated with target types, or temporal patterns?

Analysis of victims/targets

Table 6 shows the sex and age distribution of recorded victims in project area B. There is a heavy concentration here amongst younger women, with nearly half of all incidents having a woman under the age of forty as the named victim.

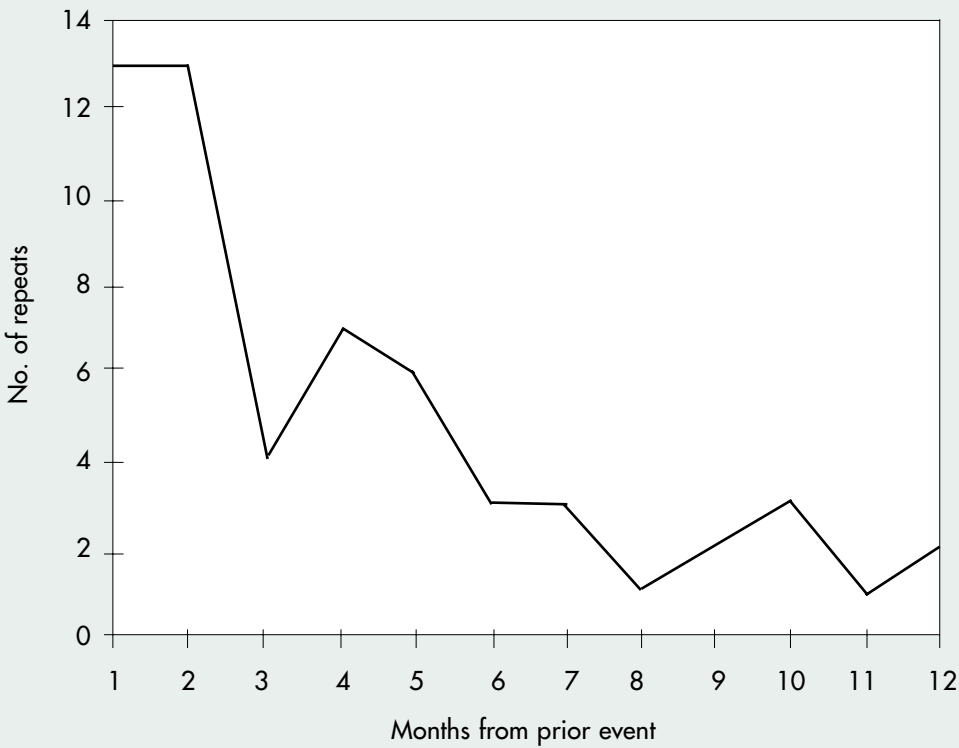
Table 6. Sex and age of recorded victim: project area B

Age	Female victim	Male victim	Total
20 or less	18	11	29
21–30	73	43	116
31–40	54	32	86
41–50	24	34	58
51–60	8	14	22
61 and over	13	9	22
Total	190	143	333

Repeat victimisation was found in Areas A and B, reflecting previous research (see Farrell and Pease, 1993, Pease, 1998). In project area B, one household had been burgled five times, four had been burgled at least four times, thirteen at least three times and fifty-seven at least

twice.¹¹ The prevention of repeat burglaries would have prevented over one in five of the recorded burglaries in the area. The literature shows that when repetition comes, it tends to come swiftly (see Figure 1).¹²

Figure 1: Time between repeats: Project Area B



The geographical clustering of offences within target areas has already been illustrated in Area A. What were the attributes of the more and less highly victimised parts? Against initial expectations, the relatively large (821 households) local authority estate at the southern end of the project area suffered a comparatively low burglary rate, at 34 per 1,000. The other main local authority estate lay to the east. It comprised just 186 dwellings, and had an annual rate of 54 per thousand, which was high by national standards but not in relation to the target area. We learned a little more by looking at the association with other ED characteristics identified in the census. The greater vulnerability of the better off parts of the area were shown in the correlations between the proportion of owner occupied accommodation and the rate of

¹¹ Between 1996-99.

¹² Figure 1 shows, for example, that in Project area B, there were 13 repeat burglaries within the first two month period shown.

burglary ($r = 0.585$; $p < 0.05$), and between the proportion of the accommodation comprising houses ($r = 0.642$; $p < 0.05$).

The geographical concentration of burglaries in Area A was illustrated at a small scale by looking at rates by full postcode, made possible by the checks made on postcode assignments in recorded crime data¹³. Table 7 shows that households in a small number of postcodes were very heavily victimised. Indeed, (as highlighted), 25% of all burglaries occurred in 9% of victimised postcodes.

Table 7. Distribution of domestic burglaries by postcode in project area A

Burglaries per postcode	Numbers of full postcodes	Total burglaries	Per cent of total burglaries
15	1	15	4
10	5	50	13
8	4	32	8
7	2	14	4
6	10	60	15
5	10	50	13
4	13	52	13
3	13	39	10
2	22	44	11
1	34	34	9
Total	114	390	100

Figure 2 shows, moreover, that same postcode burglaries in the project area tended to occur quickly, in ways akin to repeat victimisation patterns in relation to individual households. The graph shows the cumulative percentage of burglaries occurring within given time periods within the same full postcode area. In other words, in postcodes that had suffered more than one burglary, how quickly did the second or subsequent burglary occur? Close to half occurred within three months - a total of more than 120 of the 390 burglaries in the 31-month period covered by the analysis. When designing interventions, this may suggest target hardening those high-risk households that surround those victimised households before they themselves are (possibly) victimised.

In Area B, a similar pattern of proximity and short-term heightened risk was found, but street numbers rather than postcodes were used to conduct the analysis. Again, risks seemed to be higher in the short term.

¹³ The average number of addresses per full post-code was 1.5.

Figure 2: Cumulative percentage of same postcode burglaries, per month, in project area A

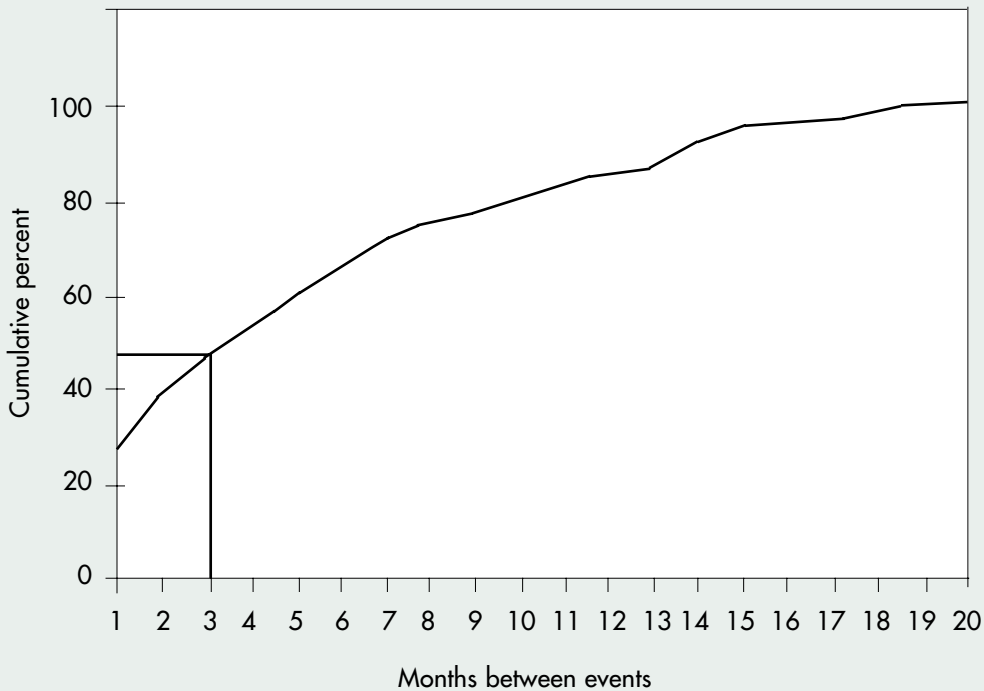


Table 8 shows that the burglaries in Area B often tended to occur on one side of the street. In Street A, for example, almost 90% of burglaries occurred on the side of the street with odd numbers (1, 3, 5, etc). This suggests that when designing a burglary reduction plan, there is a need to go to these areas to try and work out what might be responsible for the pattern. It may suggest that situational crime prevention (SCP) measures, at those most critical sites, would be most appropriate.

Table 8. The burgled side of the street in project area B

Street	Odd/even ¹³	No. burglaries	Per cent
A	Odd	14	86
B	Odd	8	88
C	Even	8	80
D	Even	30	67
E	Odd	12	67
F	Even	9	78
G	Even	16	69
H	Even	12	92

One aspect of temporal patterning of burglary in Area A is shown in Table 9. It shows burglary to have been more frequent from June to August and from October to January.

Table 9. Burglary by month (24 months) in project area A

Month	Frequency	Per cent
January	25	9
February	16	6
March	15	5
April	11	4
May	17	6
June	27	9
July	28	10
August	39	14
September	19	7
October	29	10
November	28	10
December	32	11
Total	286	101¹⁵

Table 10 presents the method of entry in Area A, depicting the precise entry point. Almost a fifth were via insecure premises. There were 8% by false pretences (where, for example, the offender presented him/herself as a water board official, a police officer, or a builder). Most of the entries, however, involved forcing or smashing a window or door as highlighted in the table.

¹⁴ Refers to odd or even house numbers.

¹⁵ Column exceeds 100% due to rounding up of percentage figures.

Table 10. MO: method of entry in project area A

Month	Door	Window	Other	Total	Per cent
Force door or window	32	35	1	68	32
Remove/break window/door	19	32	.	51	24
Door unlocked/window open	22	17	.	39	18
False pretences	17	.	.	17	8
Had a key	6	.	.	6	3
Pushed past	4	.	.	4	2
Other	3	2	7	12	6
Don't know	8	7	.	15	7
Total	111	93	8	212	100

There were distinctive patterns of mode of entry in high burglary months. In August, burglaries from insecure premises were heavily over-represented, accounting for as many as 40% of the total (compared with 13% for the rest of the year). In October, November and December, forced entries by smashing a window or door were over-represented, accounting for 60% of the total (compared to 43% for the rest of the year). This may suggest an approach that varies with the seasons, for example:

- A media campaign about closing windows and doors when going out in the summer.
- More policing of burglars in the winter/run-up to Christmas.

Implementing relevant interventions at appropriate times will maximise the chances of project success.

iii. Questions about characteristics of locations of high risk populations, that bring burglars there and make them believe the target is accessible, include:

- How good is the surveillance and how good are the conditions for surveillance?
- What is drawing offenders to the target or area?
- How do MOs vary by location in which the burglaries are taking place?

Once we know *why* an area is particularly attractive to a burglar, we can design mechanisms in order to reduce its risk. Using Area C as an example, although one would have expected there to exist good conditions for surveillance within sheltered accommodation blocks, the very fact that the victims were elderly made them (physically) vulnerable and potential targets.

Similarly, along the coastal strip where HIMO's suffered disproportionately from burglary, this could largely be attributed to the properties' poor state of repair and minimal security. Burglary pockets within beats were also found in two neighbouring areas, where there were high levels of deprivation and victimisation.

The questions asked above are illustrative. Many of them may not be relevant to the local problem, or may be unanswerable in view of the data in practice available. The analysis needs to be informed by the efforts to think through some hypotheses about the problem along the lines already indicated. Moreover, in exploring data, one question often suggests another. Glimmers of patterns emerge that call for further checks, refinements, and elaborations. At best, there can be informed dialogue with the data, from which emerges a better, more refined and tested, evidence-based account of the burglary problem, yielding relevant preventive tactics.

Quality analysis cannot be obtained simply by passing data over to an analyst, however gifted. Equally, simply asking the analyst to crunch data to others' specifications is not enough. More will be gained through a concerted, locally informed and thoughtful engagement with the available data, building on findings as they emerge.

What we have tried to emphasise here is the importance of a dialogue between the data, analysts and others with a local knowledge of the area, together with the features of both the crime and its offenders.

Analysis software

Data analysis, in basic terms, requires finding the 'right tool for the job'. Crime recording systems can be used to extract data (which is not always an easy task!), but are not specifically designed to analyse data. More comprehensive data analysis can be performed using tools such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), as used in the analysis for Areas A and B. This is powerful software that will not be available in many partnerships. It may be worth investing in it or Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) or an equivalent package. Spreadsheet packages may also be used, although statistical packages more easily allow some forms of data interrogation and visual display. An increasing number of areas now have Geographical Information Systems (GIS), which can be useful in representing spatial data patterns.

Analysis presentation

It is important to present the analysis as clearly as possible, using graphs, bar charts etc, when appropriate. In some cases, raw numbers can become very small when dealing with data subsets. It can be useful therefore to give numbers of cases as well as percentages.

4.

From analysis to strategy

The analysis – getting it done

Analysts, policy-makers and practitioners often seem to work in quite isolated ways. There is a risk here that local problem understanding, routinised data manipulation, and the response proposed in the bid will not marry up.

The kind of analysis for project development described here, intended to produce coherent evidence-based plans, requires a close partnership between practitioner, analyst and policy-maker, as follows:

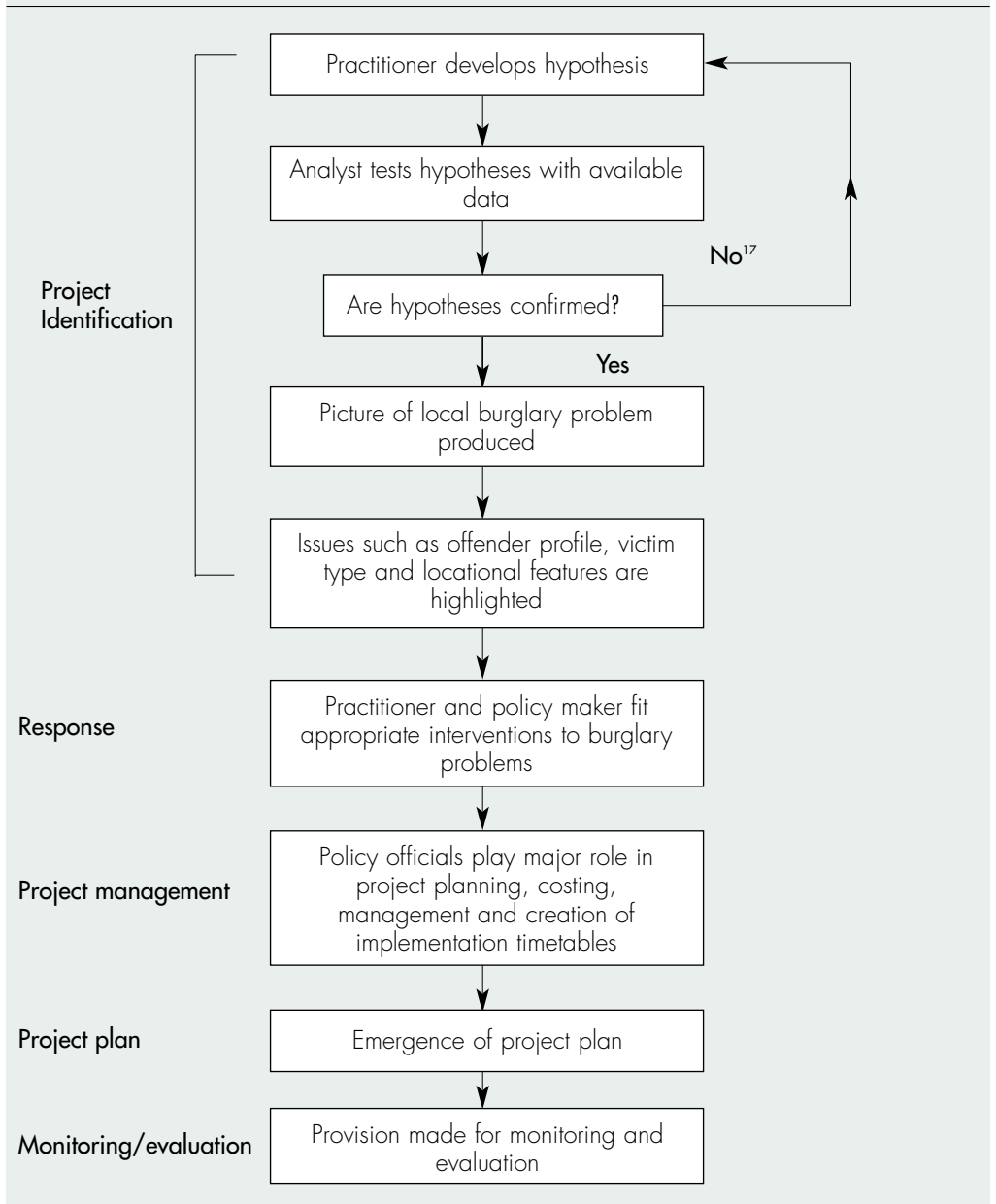
- Practitioner – will have a good feel for local issues, and can inform the analysis
- Analyst – will have ideas, but can also test and add substance to the practitioner’s best hunches
- Policy-maker – can work through what plausible, affordable options for prevention are suggested by the close-textured and informed analysis.

The analyst can then check out any additional assumptions smuggled into the proposed strategy. The practitioner can read it critically to add further views on how it might play locally. An evidence-based, but practice-informed, well-documented practicable plan should then emerge (see Figure 3). The right kind of analyst should be able to do most of the bid preparation, but they would need to be able to do much more than operate the software. They would, as should by now be clear, need to have a broad understanding of crime reduction literature and principles, and have the skills to gather, interpret, formalise and test local hunches about local crime problems. Even with a highly skilled analyst, it is likely that policy officials will be crucial in detailed project planning, costing, management and creation of provisional implementation timetables. The three plans described here, were prepared by researchers, working alongside local practitioners and policy-makers.

A ‘model’ strategy

The proposed strategy needs to show how the planned measures follow from the analysis of the local crime problem. A model strategy is one that:

- Is analysis driven.
- Explicitly understands the processes by which the plan is to reduce crime.
- Employs interventions that are mutually advantageous.
- Understands the importance of sequencing (see Section 8, ‘Developing an action plan’, for some examples)

Figure 3: Project plan stages¹⁶

¹⁶ It is important to note that the activities highlighted in Figure 3 should all take place before the project or initiative actually commences.

¹⁷ If the hypotheses are not confirmed at this stage, refer back to the practitioner.

Examples from strategies A and B

The ingredients of the strategy should fall out of the analysis. Box 1 highlights some elements from Strategy A. Each of the elements speaks to aspects of the analysis. The analysis showed repeat victimisation for individual addresses, especially in the short term. It showed that burglaries were concentrated in relatively small patches, with successive incidents often taking place quite quickly. It showed also that there was heightened risk in the summer months when houses tended to be found insecure. The three measures highlighted below addressed those features of the burglary problem in Area A. The proposed measures also made use of previous evidence, building on what was found in Huddersfield in efforts to reduce repeat victimisation (Anderson et al, 1995), using research on Neighbourhood Watch (Laycock, and Tilley, 1995), and drawing on findings about cocoon watch from the Kirkholt Burglary Reduction Project (Forrester et al, 1988).

Box 1: Some elements of the proposed strategy in project area A

To deal with repeat victimisation

In relation to owner-occupier victims, prompt advice will be given on measures they can take to reduce their risks. In relation to victims living in rented accommodation, landlords will be encouraged to make any necessary improvements to the physical security of those who have suffered burglary. Graded responses, akin to those found effective in the Huddersfield Biting Back initiative, will be provided for those victimised more than once.

To deal with emerging hot spots

Investigating officers making door to door enquiries following a burglary will provide written advice alerting those living near to victims to their increased risk, including suggestions as to how they might reduce their own and their neighbours' vulnerability. They will also be urged to be vigilant in looking out for and reporting suspicious behaviour. Temporary 'cocoon watches' will be introduced. The working hypothesis here is that resurrecting or stimulating cocoons at 'hot' times and places will be more effective and efficient than trying to sustain and serve long-term commitment to neighbourhood watch.

To deal with high risk populations and high risk behaviour

During the summer, residents will be alerted to the risks of leaving their homes insecure. During the winter months, they will be alerted to the need to use signs of occupancy, in an effort to dissuade offenders from attempting forced (and often noisy) entry.

Box 2 shows a few of the elements proposed for Area B. In each case, the measures were justified with reference to local conditions and data that had been analysed to make sense of the burglary patterns.

Box 2: Some elements of the proposed strategy in project area B

Cocoon watch

Analysis on the distance between houses burgled next in time shows that in relatively short streets (between 14-45 dwellings), half of burglaries occur to the home with a number plus or minus eight of that number. On the basis of this finding, crime prevention advice will be provided to the eight houses on either side of the victimised house. This will take the form of advice from the CPO and the community beat officer.

Covert alarms

Covert alarms will continue to be installed in houses repeatedly victimised or premises likely to be targeted.

Protecting the houses of the predictably vulnerable

The apparent concentration of victimisation amongst households headed by younger women suggests that targeting advice on them will be beneficial. Home visits by the beat officer will be ensured after an offence has occurred to check that security is adequate, etc. In particular, since they are at an age when many will have children, providing advice through schools and clinics would direct messages at the most vulnerable group. Securing properties when tenancies are taken over by younger women will be considered.

Pro-active intelligence cell

The target area is a relatively small area and as a result, many offenders are known to the community even though it seems they are seldom reported to the police. To overcome this, a consistent approach to offender targeting will be set up so that prolific burglars are both caught and deterred from further offending.

Through a small media campaign on the estates, residents will be encouraged to use Crimestoppers if they hold intelligence on offenders in the area. Anonymous telephone lines are a viable option in this local area as there exists a high level of witness intimidation if residents are known to be 'openly' passing information to the police. Residents must be persuaded to come forward with information, as in many cases the victim will know the identity of the offender.

There will normally be more than one way in which a burglary problem might, in principle, be addressed. There will also normally be less than full information on the nature of the problem. In particular, as already noted, information on offenders will be patchy. An evidence-based approach calls for using the best data available locally in conjunction with systematically learned lessons from elsewhere, applied thoughtfully to local conditions. This will require imagination and creativity. Before deciding on a strategy, it will be important to look critically at initial proposals. It is easy to decide too quickly what to do, and only *then* to consider how to do it. Issues of implementation are important, of course. But, it can be easy to jump prematurely to a response that has only surface plausibility.

The interventions that a project decides to adopt should ideally be interactive. Fundamentally they should not conflict. The projects developed in the first round of the RBI adopted both interactive approaches, e.g. where one intervention was dependent on others (crackdown and consolidation where 'community self-confidence building'¹⁸ follows enforcement), and combined approaches in which interventions were proposed but not necessarily integrated with each other. Projects should avoid approaches where one intervention would be detrimental to the other, e.g. employing target hardening measures that would in turn impede the success of covert detection methods employing tracking devices on the same households.

¹⁸ Tilley et al (1999)

5.

Defining aims, objectives and targets

The approach outlined in the preceding pages suggests that interventions should be planned once the analysis has been completed. Therefore, interventions are data driven, rather than driven by the need to fulfill previously defined project objectives. While this is, we think, correct, it does not conform to standard text book approaches to project management, in which interventions should flow from (previously determined) aims and objectives. However, we felt that it worked best for us in the particular project that we were undertaking. Moreover, practitioner ideas about how the analytically specified problem should be tackled will sharpen the ways in which likely outcomes can be defined. It would therefore seem prudent and realistic to work with an approach where interventions are first developed with a project management structure fitted around it, rather than attempting to 'shoe-horn' interventions into a preconceived notion of what the project is aiming to achieve. Indeed, developing interventions first will help to clarify what the whole project itself is about.

This approach should not be taken to mean that defining aims, objectives and targets are not important. They will help to provide a coherent description of what the project is planning to achieve in terms of 'outcome'. While analysis of the problem will justify the need for a project and the strategy will determine what interventions are applied to tackle it, the aims, objectives and targets will help clarify what the project will actually achieve. Most importantly in the current context, they will help clarify how crime is to be reduced.

Defining the project aim

The project aim outlines the overall project rationale. This should be kept as simple and as short as possible, preferably as a single sentence. While such aims can come in many guises, they should ideally be framed in terms of the desired outcome or effect the project hopes to achieve. Most crime reduction projects will target specific geographic areas, communities or socio-demographic groups. These should also be specified in the aim definition. Examples of project aims might be:

- To reduce domestic burglary in [name of town / wards / beats etc.]
- To reduce domestic burglary suffered by students in [name of town / wards / beats etc.]
- To reduce distraction burglary suffered by residents aged over 60 in [name of town / wards / beats etc.]

Setting such aims will help, during the life of the project itself, as a reminder of why the work is being conducted. In the process of getting on with the job, one can sometimes forget about the overall purpose, and returning periodically to the original plan may help to re-focus effort or maintain momentum.

Defining the project objectives¹⁹

The objectives (usually there will be more than one in a project plan) should be clearly related to the overall project plan. For example, if a project is designed to reduce the victimisation of students, then the objectives should provide details of how this is to be achieved. In essence, they are a kind of mini aim that when added together describe the ways in which the project aim will be achieved.

The experience of examining a large number of crime reduction project plans has shown that they often seem to be developed without a clear idea of what effect an intervention will have. They fail to articulate the 'mechanism' (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) by which change will be brought about. This, however, is key to designing an effective crime reduction plan. Ideally, an objective should consist of two parts – describing what will be done and how it will have an impact on crime. This may be phrased as "changing X to achieve Y", where X describes what change will be made to the current situation and Y describes the purpose of making that change. Some examples of objectives of this kind are:

- Increasing natural surveillance, in order to increase the risk of detection.
- Improving household perimeter security, in order to increase the effort of offending.
- Reducing the market for stolen goods in order to increase the effort involved in offending.

Under each objective, it should be possible to list the (previously proposed) interventions. This in turn should allow one to see a logical connection between the project aim, objectives and interventions. If once constructed, the interventions do not appear to fit the overall project aim, or the objectives, then the most likely cause will be either inappropriately defined objectives, or interventions that do not meet the overall crime reduction purpose of the scheme.

In reality, any objective may have several ways of reducing crime and these can be incorporated into the objective. For example, an objective may be to improve household perimeter security, in order to increase the effort of offending *and* increase the risk of detection.

A systematic approach to mapping out the causes of criminal events and the range of interventions in those causes is under development in the Home Office. The 'Conjunction of Criminal Opportunity' (Ekblom, 2000) aims to help practitioners carry out the kind of processes set out above, and in particular to focus on mechanisms of intervention in the way described here. A summary of the framework is available on the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.org.uk (under *Toolkits/Practical Tools*).

¹⁹ For further discussion on the identification of project objectives, strategies and tactics, see G.D. Berry and M. P. Carter (1992) *Assessing Crime Prevention Initiatives: The First Steps*. Crime Prevention Unit, Paper 31.

Setting up outputs and milestones

Outputs are measures of the activity conducted during an intervention. These should be simple, measurable activities that provide an indication of how well the project is progressing. As such, they are essential for project management purposes as they allow the project manager to plan how much will be achieved during the life of the project and to assess at the end of the project whether the original plan was fulfilled. Box 3 below shows the output measure for a neighbourhood watch scheme to be the setting up of eight new schemes in the area in a year. Similarly, Box 4 outlines an output measure for a market reduction initiative.

Milestones are simply the apportionment of the output measure over time. These will allow the project manager to assess from an early stage whether the project is on schedule and whether any remedial action needs to be taken. In the example in Box 3, two schemes are planned per quarter and if these are achieved, all eight will be in place by the end of the year.

Box 3: Setting up Neighbourhood Watch (NW)

Objective 1	Increase natural surveillance, in order to increase detection.
Intervention	Increase the number of NW schemes in the target area.
Output²⁰	Introduce 8 NW schemes in an area over 12 months.
Milestones	Set up 2 schemes per quarter.
Target % reduction	Reduce burglary by 20% in areas covered by scheme.

Box 4: Market reduction

Objective 2	Reduce the market for stolen goods so to increase the effort involved in offending.
Intervention	Distribute property marking kits to all households in target area.
Output	Give property marking advice to 400 households over 12 months.
Milestones	Give PM advice to 100 households per quarter.
Target % reduction	Reduce burglary by 20% in target area. ²¹

Setting a target percentage reduction

Setting a target percentage reduction probably only makes sense for the project as a whole, rather than for individual elements as there will almost certainly be an interaction effect between interventions. Setting a target is also no easy matter and will inevitably involve a fair degree of guesswork. However, it should be possible to reduce the error in the estimates by

²⁰ Smaller outputs in order to increase natural surveillance may include removing shrubbery and improving street lighting. They can be measured using a single outcome.

²¹ Assessing whether displacement has occurred to non property marked goods may be an additional indicator of success.

attempting to assign the potential reduction expected from each intervention. Box 5 provides examples from each of the three areas examined.

The basic criterion for application to Rounds 1/2 of the RBI was that residential burglary figures ran at twice the national average over a three-year period.²² Projects, when applying for funding, were asked to set a target percentage reduction for an absolute fall in recorded crime,²³ and to explain how they would go about achieving this fall.

Setting an exact target percentage reduction is a challenging addition to any bid, as success or failure of a project may be judged according to whether or not that target was achieved. Partnerships concern themselves that if crime has not been sufficiently reduced (i.e. where targets have not been met), they are seen as 'failed' projects. This is not necessarily the case, although team morale may be weakened as a result and partners may be reluctant to compete for future funding. However, it is important that such targets are set, as it is these challenges that provide both goals to strive for and a basic rationale for the implementation of the project.

Hough and Tilley (1998b) suggest adopting SMART outcome targets - that is, where the targets are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time scale attached

Targets require commitment from the project team. Targets should cover the short, medium and long term and be revisited at relevant intervals, depending on the length of the project. A year-long project may review targets on a monthly basis as the focus for monitoring reports and management meetings.

Box 5: Targets for burglary reduction in the three project areas

Area A

This area proposes an ambitious fall of 40% for burglaries in the project areas. This was calculated by halving the six month rate of re-victimisation (on current figures about 15 burglaries would be saved per annum), halving the six month same postcode concentration (saving a further 15), and halving the temporal excess concentration during the summer and autumn months when a further 12 burglaries could be saved. Adding

²² 54/1000 households

²³ The target percentage reduction was set at a minimum level of 25% for Rounds 1 and 2.

these together, 42 burglaries per annum would be saved producing a fall of 28% on an annual total of 151 burglaries for the area. Further elements of intervention, i.e. raising public awareness and heightening the perceived risk to offenders through the proactive targeting of offenders, is expected to have a greater impact, leading to an aspired 40% reduction.

Area B

The six most vulnerable streets in this target area suffered 173 burglaries over the stated three-year period. Analysis showed that target hardening the victims of burglary would prevent approximately eleven burglaries in the target areas. Based on 1998-99 figures, this was calculated to produce a 5% reduction in burglary. Although the crime reduction efforts of the other interventions were thought to be hard to assess, i.e. road check operations, drug outreach workers and anti-social behaviour orders, in combination they were thought to be able to deliver a further 25%, giving a 30% reduction in total.

Area C

This project proposed to reduce domestic burglary in three virtual communities by 25% within 12 months of commencement. The situation would be monitored for a further 12 months thereafter to ensure sustainability.

Performance Indicators (PI's)

When setting project targets, 'cross cutting' performance indicators²⁴ may need to be addressed. Multi-agency plans, such as described here, rely on partnerships setting targets rather than individual agencies, and such targets may complicate or conflict with the PI's set by single agencies. Ideally, the targets established by multi-agency partnerships should co-exist alongside the PI's set by each individual agency.

²⁴ Hough and Tilley (1998b)

A successful project will have in place a systematic structure for monitoring its progress and a dedicated project manager who should be responsible for the monitoring process. Monitoring checks whether the partnership is doing what it originally set out to do and increases the likelihood of targets being achieved. It is futile to set targets without establishing a system for monitoring them. Provision for monitoring needs to be thought about in terms of the particular crime prevention ideas being employed and the relevant data sets to be collected in order to monitor their progress.

Data that will be useful for managing the project should also be collected. For example, if a project is implementing target hardening, it may be useful to collect data on the length of time taken to install it (in addition to general burglary data) as this impacts on potential repeat victimisation rates.

Pre-set agreements may have to be established before data collection commences e.g. data protection protocols and/or agreements with analysts to set up macros for the analysis of monthly crime data, etc.

The beauty of a multi-agency project is that responsibility for crime reduction is shared. However, theory and reality are often very different and in a number of cases work is often executed by a single agency. To prevent this, the project team, led by the project manager, all have a key role in nurturing and actually using (existing/new) links with outside agencies.

Multi-agency working also raises potential problems in knowing where responsibility for project monitoring lies. Therefore, each person must be clear on what his or her *individual* role is and then decide, overall, what agencies lead on what. This reduces the chances of inter-agency tension and friction.

Project A sought to establish a Burglary Reduction Steering Group as part of their initiative, where various representatives from the police, probation, Victim Support, Neighbourhood Watch and the tenants association would meet monthly to share information on the progress of the project. Data assembled by the crime analyst, although imperative in order to assess quantitative changes in crime figures, would be collected (monthly), alongside anecdotal evidence from tenants for example, which would include qualitative measures such as changes in the fear of crime. It is wise to prepare monthly monitoring reports, which can then be used as the starting point for steering group meetings.

Monitoring progress, 'tweaking' interventions where necessary and being receptive to emerging lessons are all important aspects of the project management process. Effective monitoring is more likely if things are kept simple, with clear, stated aims, objectives and outputs.

Assessing progress

Tracking progress is fundamental to the monitoring regime. However, assessments will need to be aware of the following affecting or swaying possible progress:

- Displacement
- Unexpected outcomes
- National crime trends
- Further investment in the area²⁵
- Changes in reporting rates as victims are more or less reluctant to inform the police (e.g. crimestoppers' campaigns may encourage more victims to come forward; alternatively, periods of witness intimidation may well have the opposite effect).

Monitoring can be seen as a kind of 'light touch' evaluation, observing basic crime trends and project implementation without undertaking any level of sophisticated hypothesis testing. Different rounds of the CRP are being both monitored and evaluated up to the end of 2002. What is crucial to mention here is that, regardless of whether the Home Office evaluates, it is essential that local projects continue to monitor their own projects, some of the reasons of which are outlined above.

²⁵ Some areas have received funding from a number of different agencies, e.g. the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), CRP, New Deal, etc, which could affect project progress. Similarly, progress may be swayed in those areas implementing a number of different projects under the CRP (e.g. burglary, CCTV and targeted policing schemes).

7.

Achieving sustainability

A well thought through bid should come with a plan for its sustainability. This provides substance to the overall project and suggests possible milestones for funding past its initial funding period.

Lack of funding is frequently cited as a reason for lack of sustainability, i.e. that reductions made in the first year could not be maintained. Not all interventions will work, and those that do work may not all be able to be maintained. If resources are limited, interventions must be prioritised.

It should always be borne in mind that resources necessary to deal with a diminished problem are likely themselves to diminish. One way of considering sustainability is to bring the scale of a problem within resources that are available in the absence of special funding. In this sense, success brings sustainability with it, so long as policy makers do not think that further resources can be abstracted because there is no longer a problem.

Further ways of achieving project sustainability include the following:²⁶

1. Changing the routine practices within local agencies, e.g. issuing advice to new tenants and improving the security of incoming householders.
2. Making relatively permanent changes in the physical environment e.g. alley-gating, target hardening, estate design.
3. Imposing leverage (e.g. through performance management regimes) on those in a position to reduce the risk of burglary e.g. university housing offices to give out tenancies only in houses found to be secure, setting up accredited landlord schemes, etc.
4. Training up people in partnerships using existing agency resources so that lessons of good crime prevention practice can be transferred to further areas of inter-agency work.
5. Crackdown and consolidation: following high intensity action with other activities to improve the capacity of the community to fight against being the targets of further crime.
6. Investing in an area that has shown to be particularly effective, through various ways proposed by the partnership. This might involve applying for further government money (e.g. SRB funding) or other agency funding.

²⁶ These examples are not suited to labour intensive interventions e.g. focused police operations, that are largely effective *whilst* being implemented.

The three areas we examined outlined their various methods of sustainability as follows:

Box 6: Methods of sustainability

Area A

The hot watch worker will essentially co-ordinate the project. To secure sustainable effects, the worker will 'seed habits of attention and respond to emerging burglary problems'²⁷. The lessons learnt from the hot watch worker's remit will be incorporated into mainstream practice once the official year's funding has expired.

Area B

The bulk of the money for this area will be spent on comprehensive security upgrading for the most victimised dwellings. Adequately target hardening houses and avoiding mere 'quick fixes' will reduce their vulnerability and will provide some provision towards longer-term crime prevention.

Area C

This project will be used as a means of 'piloting' various interventions in order to reduce the burglary problem in three carefully defined virtual communities. It is acknowledged that some interventions may fail to work in that particular context and will have to be reviewed as the project develops. At the end of the developmental process, we will have endeavoured to discover what interventions work in what contexts. In order to sustain the intended reduction in burglary, we aim to extract the valuable experience and sense of good practice gained from the three sites and transfer it to areas of similarity.²⁸

²⁷ Burglary Reduction Plan, project area A. September 1999.

²⁸ Burglary Reduction Plan, project area C. September 1999.

8.

Developing an action plan

Once targets have been set and provision has been made for project monitoring, an action plan needs to be drawn up. This will have partly emerged from the proposed strategy described earlier, except that it may not have addressed timing issues or delegated particular areas of work to individuals. It may be useful to develop action plans for each objective to make sure that programmes of work can be realistically carried out. An action plan needs to follow a logical, sequential order if it is to have the desired crime reduction effect.

Issues around the implementation of interventions will make up the body of the action plan. Interventions need to be thought about in terms of whether they are short or long term. An intervention that brings early results will boost confidence and hopefully deliver some promising crime figures, for example target hardening. Alternatively, longer term solutions that are more labour intensive and therefore more expensive e.g. offender targeting schemes or offender diversion programmes, will take considerably longer to implement and will not deliver 'quick win' results. However, when such social crime prevention measures are successful, and for example, offender behaviour is changed, then the relative gains in the long term may prove more fruitful than 'quick fix' remedies.

In short, a successful action plan will be one that:

- Understands the priorities
- Knows how each will be tackled
- Delegates the work - who will do what, and when?
- Measures performance - outputs, milestones and outcomes
- Sets the target results

Timescales

The best crime reduction action plans are short, set out clearly and have a timetable attached. It is a good idea to chart the key project stages. Gantt charts are very useful for drawing up daily/weekly/monthly project timescales, working out 'slack' project time and delegating particular areas of work to members of the project team. They can either be done by hand or by using computer packages designed for project management. These packages can also construct the project's 'critical path' by transferring the key project stages into an activity network and highlighting the 'critical activities', i.e. those activities that if late, will delay the whole project.

Timing will depend on local circumstances. Partnerships will vary widely in relation to the scale of the problem, the amount of funding allocated and the staffing available to actually implement crime reduction measures.

The timetable for the interventions proposed will determine when they are implemented. For example, if steering groups are to be established, it is important that they are established in the first quarter since they will act as the main sounding board and vehicle for expression for such projects. Adequate data systems, from which monthly crime data can be downloaded, are also crucial from the outset of any project.

9.

Costing interventions

Costings can be done in either of two ways:

- a. Overall cost of the project
- b. Monthly/quarterly expenditure profiles.

Estimating the overall cost of a project

Regardless of whether funding is being sought from external agencies, it is good practice to cost the resources going into a project. This should ideally be divided into two kinds of cost – those which involve using existing or redirected resources within the organisation and those requiring additional resources that would otherwise not have been available. Existing resources should take account of the full costs involved as far as possible. This is especially important for staff time, which is usually the largest element of a project but which is often overlooked when costing projects. If money is being sought from external agencies, such as from the Home Office under the CRP, it is important to show which costs are being requested from the funding agency and which are being funded by the applicant.

For costs involved in purchasing equipment or services, quotes should be obtained in advance, so that the estimates provided in a costed plan are as accurate as possible.

Estimating the cost per month/quarter

Once overall costs have been calculated, these should be broken down into smaller time periods (months/quarters) so that the project spend can be monitored closely, allowing project managers to identify at an early stage whether the project is heading for an under/overspend.

Table 11 illustrates how the three areas planned to spend their one year budgets, per quarter. The total expenditure allocated to the project area is given so to represent the percent of total expenditure spent in each quarter.²⁹ Ideally, these costs should be broken down further by interventions or major activities.³⁰

Project A spends an even share of money throughout the year due to the employment of a full time project co-ordinator. The sum of £45,000 is simply divided into four quarters. Project B, although essentially a target hardening strategy, attempts to upgrade the security in those houses repeatedly burgled in the first two quarters and seeks to put extra resources into a local

²⁹ Rounds 2 and 3 of the RBI allocated a sum of up to £100 for each domestic/attempted burglary over the last three years. For example an area that had suffered a total of 300 burglaries over the last three years could bid for up to £30,000 (300 x£100).

³⁰ See 'Measuring inputs: guidance for evaluators' (Home Office, 2000) for a broader discussion on costs and cost effectiveness.

Table 11: Quarterly expenditure profile by project area

Project Area	Quarter	Cost	Per cent of total expenditure spent per quarter
A	First	£11,250	25
	Second	£11,250	25
	Third	£11,250	25
	Fourth	£11,250	25
	Project sum	£45,000	100
B	First	£12,050	26
	Second	£8,800	18
	Third	£12,875	28
	Fourth	£12,875	28
	Project sum	£46,600	100
C	First	£6,400	19
	Second	£19,800	59
	Third	£3,550	11
	Fourth	£3,550	11
	Project sum	£33,300	100

drug outreach centre along with further target hardening measures in the third and fourth quarter. Alternatively, Project C spends less than a fifth of its budget in the first quarter and spends nearly 60% of it in the second quarter through target hardening one hundred homes of the elderly and residents of HIMOs.

There is sometimes a tendency for projects to over-estimate early spend and achievements. Problems with obtaining staff and, for example, gaining legal permissions to fit alley-gates could delay projects and mean that early targets are not met. This can in turn reduce enthusiasm and support for projects. It is essential therefore that projects are aware of the types of interventions that can be susceptible to delays (e.g. alleygating, offender-based initiatives, surveillance techniques) and understand the impact which such delays could have on the project.

10.

Taking time to prepare a funding bid

It is not possible to determine with much precision how long it should take to prepare a funding bid. This will depend on the quality of the data being used, the familiarity of the analysts with the data-systems being drawn on, the ease with which the analysts can tap into local understanding of the problem, and the complexity of the procedures for agreeing the bid. We took fifteen person days as a modal figure. However, this does not necessarily mean that it can be done within three working weeks. There will almost certainly be delays brought about by the time it takes to obtain data, the time it takes to arrange meetings for consultation and so forth. The fifteen person day figure is therefore a measure of activity time required, rather than a chronological sequence.

The following activities have been identified together with an estimate of the time it should take to complete them:

Box 7: Suggested time taken to prepare a bid	
	No. days
● Identification of, an agreement on, eligible high risk population(s)	2
● Consultation with local officers, officials and residents	1
● Assembling relevant data sets	2
● Data cleaning	4
● Data analysis	2
● Writing up results	1
● Consultation of provisional plan on basis of analysis	1
● Consultation on provisional plan	1
● Refinement of final plan	1
Total	15

11.

Plan preparation checklist

Finally, the following checklist may help in ensuring that the most important parts to the bid are completed.

Box 8: Bid preparation checklist	
Identification of the following:	Tick
Problem identification	
1. Nature of burglary problem and analysis of possible causes	
2. Definition of target area and analysis of burglary patterns over past three years	
3. Number of burglaries in target area over past three years	
4. Rate of burglaries per 1000 households in target area over past three years	
5. Numbers of burglaries by housing type and point of entry	
6. Victim type	
7. Offender Profile	
8. Rates of Repeat Victimisation	
Response	
9. Interventions to reduce burglary based on analysis of problem	
10. Identification of aims, objectives and targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write mission statement (project aim) ● Describe how the aim will be achieved (objective) ● Define outputs ● Set target percentage reduction 	
Project management	
11. Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify tasks ● Identify resources 	
12. Timescales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chart key project stages/interventions (Gantt charts/Venn diagrams) 	
13. Costings Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Estimate overall cost of a project ● Estimate cost per month/quarter 	
14. Contact details of project co-ordinator	

The first round of the burglary reduction element of the CRP yielded information about strengths and weaknesses in the preparation of bids for funding. Of particular concern was that some ideas were only partially developed, and that in consequence they remained unfunded. The other major Home Office concern was that the specification of the burglary problem in terms of geography may have proved unduly restrictive.

The second of these concerns was relatively easy to respond to. The arrangements for the second round of bids were changed so that a high-risk group, defined in non-geographic terms, would nonetheless be eligible for funding. This meant that forces with few geographically defined hot spots could be eligible for funding if they could identify groups of households sharing some characteristics, which meant they were at high risk of burglary.

The question of how to stimulate the development of proposals into a form, which did full justice to the insights of proposers, was more difficult. Three contrasting areas were chosen, and dialogue between PRCU researchers and local people, leading to some analysis of information was undertaken. At a minimum, this led to some analyses being done that would not otherwise have taken place, and also led to some crime prevention ideas being developed and sought which may not otherwise have been realised. This process was relayed back to those who worked up bids for the second round of the Reducing Burglary Initiative.

The process

The process whereby ideas were developed and refined is inadequately described in this report. To give a flavour of what is missing, the work in one area led to a number of false starts, and starts which were promising but which could not be translated into worked up proposals to meet the tight deadline imposed.³¹ For example, the possibility that homes near bail hostels suffered high rates of burglary could not be explored because a kind of mapping which represented risk in terms of population density rather than linear distance was not available. This possibility has not been discarded, and work to clarify risk of being one of the nearest homes to a hostel (even if the linear distance from it is a matter of miles) will be undertaken. The options available to reduce burglaries to HIMOs along the coastal strip were numerous, and remain under consideration. Once small sheltered accommodation complexes were highlighted as problematic, a detailed analysis of the attributes which make for a potent burglary 'chemistry' was undertaken. This included the inability (or lack of perceived responsibility) to report burglary events to the police, and the design features associated with entry points for the burglar.

³¹ A deadline for applications was not imposed under Round 3 of the RBI; rather partnerships could apply for funding within a year long 'rolling round'.

Summing up

- Much can usefully be gleaned through interrogating crime data routinely collected by the police, though what can be analysed varies by force.
- Though the time taken to prepare plans will clearly vary by the nature and extent of the problem, fifteen working days should be sufficient in most circumstances.
- Crime problems are not concentrated only in terms of geography but also in terms of 'virtual communities'. Whilst national research can point to some characteristic high risk groups, and local knowledge can be helpful in identifying other candidates, local research is needed to test out hypotheses about those who are most vulnerable.
- Even where high-victimisation rate populations are defined in geographical terms, there will be substantial variation in risk in sub-areas, where preventive efforts can most usefully be targeted.
- High rates of repeat victimisation, especially in the period immediately after a crime, are common and provide a routine focus for analysis and preventive efforts. Crime risks appear also to be heightened in the short term close by those who have been victimised. This too provides a focus for routine analysis and preventive work.
- Other indicators of heightened risk by place and time can be analysed in terms of available data. Analysis can also usefully be informed by research, common sense and informed local opinion.
- Understanding of high risk populations and of what might be done to reduce risk can be gained by site visits, interrogating data about MOs, goods stolen, and the attributes of victims.
- Different suites of measures will be appropriate, according to the nature of the high risk communities and what leads them to suffer high risks.
- There are various ways of trying to achieve longer-term impact. Their planning requires imagination and thought from the early stages of project development.

The report as it stands is a mixture of reporting a process in which experience and analysis combine to optimise (a) crime reduction possibilities, and (b) judgements of what looks and feels like a good way of doing things. Hopefully, the balance is far enough towards the former to make the report helpful to its readers.

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Summary burglary bid: project area A

1. Definition of target group/area

The target area is clearly bounded by road A to the North, road B to the East, road C to the South and road D to the West.³⁴

2. Brief description of target group/area

35% of the housing is either local authority or privately owned. Privately rented accommodation accounts for 20% of all dwellings. The remaining 10% are rented from housing associations. A third of the housing is detached, semi-detached or terraced and the remainder are flats. With the exception of two local authority late 1960's housing estates, the area comprises mainly mid-nineteenth century villas, some of which are now divided into flats. A process of 'gentrification' has occurred over the past two decades. Three quarters of the population are aged between 16-64.

3. Number of households covered

2,300 (taken from 1991 census, adjusting for two enumeration districts which are not fully in the target area).

4. Number of domestic burglaries over past three years

Jan-Dec 1997 ³⁵	135
Jan-Dec 1998	158
Jan-July 1999	97 (annual equivalent 166)

5. Domestic burglary rate per thousand households for past three years

Jan-Dec 1997	59
Jan-Dec 1998	69
Jan-Dec 1999	72 (at the time of writing, an expected rate was calculated on the basis of the Jan-July 1999 figures)

6. Total domestic burglaries over past three years

Estimate – 453 (grossing up from 390 over the 31 months for which robust data are available), or 459 (annualising part 1999 figures and adding them to 1997 and 1998 figures).

³² It is important to note that these are summarised versions of the bids and that a much greater level of detail would be required in a formal bid document, as described in the report.

³³ Actual names of places have been omitted throughout the three summaries.

³⁴ The target group/area can simply be named here, or *briefly* described, as shown.

³⁵ Rates are given here in calendar years as opposed to financial years, as they should now be submitted.

7. Sources of information on number of domestic burglaries

Police and Local Authority, which check the geographical assignment of incidents

8. Analysis of domestic burglary problem

- The constituent EDs vary widely by burglary rate, going from 23 per 1,000 to 370 per 1,000. There is a statistically significant correlation between proportion of houses (as against flats) and rate of burglary, and between proportion of owner occupied dwellings and burglary rate. This suggests that better-off households, likely to contain more items of value, are disproportionately being targeted.
- 25% of burglaries occur in 7% of full postcodes, and over 40% of same postcode burglaries occur within three months. This suggests that offenders are returning to familiar small areas.
- Same address repeats account for 16% of all burglaries in the period for which data were examined. There is a distinct and typical time course. Repeats are concentrated in the first four months after an incident. This suggests offenders are returning to familiar addresses.
- For 15% of burglaries there is a time window of less than an hour when the burglary may have been committed. In 13% of cases, the time window is more than a day. This suggests that some offenders are either disturbed when they offend, or are knowledgeable about the movements of some of those whose properties they enter.
- Fifty-five per cent of the burglaries occurred in the months of July, August, October, November and December. This suggests that burglaries are occurring more frequently at times when houses are left empty and/or windows are left open.
- A large majority of burglaries involved forced entry, although 20% were through insecure doors and windows.
- Half the burglaries involved losses of goods valued at less than £423. Most goods stolen were small and lightweight, easily carried on foot.
- The clear-up rate was 13%. Men in their 20's were involved in just over 80% of cases for which there was one or more accused. None of those accused was female. Almost all those for whom a resident home address was available lived within north or east X. It is not clear whether the likely offenders for whom data are available are representative of those committing the remaining offences in the target area.

9. Proposed interventions

Domestic burglaries are unevenly distributed by time and place. The interventions aim to focus on those times and places when and where burglaries tend to occur. The proposal is to employ a 'hot watch' worker to track and mobilise effective responses where and when they are needed. These will include:

- Advice to victims (and landlords) about what they can do to reduce their burglary risks and of the need to act quickly
- Establishing cocoons around victims, alerting neighbours to their short-term heightened risk and what they might do to reduce it
- Following a burglary, delivery of information sheets by officers making door-to-door visits, alerting neighbours to their need for caution and asking for particular care to be taken to report suspicious behaviour to the police
- Issuing advice to residents to be cautious at times of the year when risks are highest
- Targeting police patrols at hot spots, including stop and search where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion
- Expenditure of a modest budget to respond to existing or emerging 'hot' risks where other sources of funding are unavailable.

10. Expected impact on annual domestic burglary rate

A 40% fall in the annual burglary rate.

11. Provision for longer-term maintenance of reduced domestic burglary rates

Part of the hot-watch worker's remit will be to stimulate routine ways of identifying and responding to 'hot' problems in the area, particularly in relation to victims and the areas immediately surrounding them.

12. Costs

The bid is for £45,000, of which £30,000 covers the employment costs of the hot-watch worker and £15,000 is for materials and interventions that cannot be provided through existing services.

Summary burglary bid: project area B

1. Definition of target group/area

Project Area B houses an estate that is part of X Operational Command Unit (OCU), covering Beat X. It is situated to the north east of X and lies adjacent to X valley. There are two main housing estates, on X and Y. Areas of open space divide the two estates, which arguably facilitates offending and reduces the likelihood of detection.

2. Brief description of target group/area

The estates are made up of semi-detached and terraced housing with the majority of houses being council owned. Within the borough, a marked dichotomy exists in terms of wealth, with parts of the estate being considerably worse off than some of its counterparts. This division, to a certain extent, has influenced patterns of offending.³⁶ Areas within the project area are subject to poor health, high unemployment and inadequate living conditions, so much so that a recent report has identified the existence of an underclass.

3. Number of households covered

2,411 (taken from the 1991 census)

4. Number of domestic burglaries over past three years

Apr 1996 – Mar 1997	125
Apr 1997 – Mar 1998	136
Apr 1998 – Mar 1999	205

5. Domestic burglary rate per thousand households for past three years

Apr 1996 – Mar 1997	65
Apr 1997 – Mar 1998	56
Apr 1998 – Mar 1999	85

6. Total domestic burglaries over past three years

466 (1 April 1997 - 31 March 1999)

7. Sources of information on number of domestic burglaries

Police crime data

8. Analysis of domestic burglary problem

The following analysis was compiled using burglary dwelling data from some 350 burglaries in the area, over the period May 1997 – July 1999.

³⁶ Offenders from more deprived areas tend to travel across the area's two OCUs to offend.

- 54% of burglaries were of semi-detached houses, which reflects the type of housing stock in the area. Flats were targeted in 6% of cases. The two most common points of entry were the rear (47%) and the front (28%). Possible interventions point towards target hardening rear and front windows and doors, as in most cases, locks and catches were forced in order to gain entry. Entry through front windows was rare.
- The average window of opportunity (the earliest and latest time at which the crime could have occurred) is five hours. There is a statistically reliable association between the length of the window of opportunity and the time of day, with shorter windows of opportunity being exploited later in the day.
- In the target area, one household had been burgled five times, four had been burgled at least four times, thirteen at least three times and fifty-seven at least twice. Analysis showed that preventing repeat burglaries would have prevented over one in five of the recorded burglaries in the area. Over 60% of repeat burglaries occurred within three months of the preceding one. Strategies for reducing repeats are included in the proposed list of interventions.
- There were 90 burglaries (about a quarter of the total) in X Crescent and the roads leading off it, namely road A (34 incidents), road B (38 incidents), road C (13 incidents) and road D (5 incidents). The burglaries on Road A accounted for a third of all burglaries where the door panel had been kicked in. A further hotspot, although less self contained, appeared around roads E (12 incidents), F (12 incidents) and a part of G (14 incidents).
- Women made up 58% of identifiable victims and men 42%. Women tended to be younger victims; some 63% of named victims under 40 were female. The apparent frequency of (young) female victimisation calls for crime prevention advice and security upgrading to be targeted towards this group.

9. Proposed interventions

Reducing the risk of repeat victimisation

- Upgrading the security of properties soon after a burglary has occurred
- Target hardening front and rear windows and locks
- Setting up cocoons adjacent to recently/repeatedly victimised dwellings

Cooling hotspots

- High visibility policing, police crackdowns, offender targeting, security upgrading and neighbourhood cocoons are all viable options. Where two particularly vulnerable roads meet, a mobile CCTV system may provide effective covert surveillance.

Reducing risky behaviour amongst the vulnerable

- Providing crime prevention advice to women possibly through schools and clinics.
- Local authority to secure premises when tenancies are taken over by young women.

Increasing risks to offenders

- Useful strategy may include taking CJ samples for DNA profiling as well as fingerprints and possibly shoe marks.
- Use patch based SOCO's, with a close relationship to investigating officers, to collect better evidence from crime scenes for the purposes of detecting offence series. Use of special computer system to link crimes using physical evidence.

Drug Treatment

- Using funds to provide more facilities for drug outreach workers

10. Expected impact on annual domestic burglary rate

A 30% fall in the annual burglary rate in the target area.

11. Provision for longer-term maintenance of reduced domestic burglary rates

Adequately target hardening houses and avoiding mere 'quick fixes', will reduce their vulnerability and will provide some provision towards longer-term crime prevention.

12. Costs

The bid is for £46,600. The money will be spent on security upgrading (repeatedly) victimised dwellings and providing drug outreach workers at a local rehabilitation centre with extra facilities.

Summary burglary bid: project area C

1. Definition of target groups/area

The project area is made up of three carefully defined virtual communities. In the force area, no beat exceeded the rate of double the national average of 54/1000, although it was recognised that there were particular groups of people living in areas who were especially vulnerable to burglary.

2. Brief description of target group/area

The three virtual communities focus on the following;

- Burglary of the elderly, which was subject to particularly low levels of reporting to the police
- Burglary of multi-occupancy dwellings along a particular coastal strip, occupied by a high number of benefit claimants
- Specific pockets within police beats susceptible to high rates of burglary (referred to from here on as X and Y)

3. Number of households covered

Elderly persons' homes	383
Houses in multi-occupancy	638
X/Y	458

4. Numbers of domestic burglaries over past three years

Elderly persons' homes	66
Houses in multi-occupancy	132
X/ Y	135

5. Domestic burglary rate per thousand households for past three years

Elderly persons' homes	57
Houses in multi-occupancy	83
X/Y	99

6. Total domestic burglaries over past three years in three communities

333

7. Sources of information on number of domestic burglaries

Police Crime data and District Council housing census data

8. Analysis of domestic burglary problem

Elderly

Burglary of the elderly was quickly highlighted as a problem and subject to particularly low levels of reporting to the police. The burglary rate for this virtual community was analysed using data from sixteen sheltered accommodation schemes in X County Council, the properties all being single-occupancy bungalows or flats. Although only half of these locations had a burglary rate twice the national average, the average rate for the total number of locations exceeded the critical level.

Multiple occupancy dwellings

Disproportionate levels of burglary were found amongst multiple occupancy dwellers along the North Wales coastal strip, which stretches from A to B. Five enumeration districts were identified as having particularly high burglary rates. Houses of multi-occupancy yielded an average rate of 83 burglaries per 1000 households over three years. Council officials confirmed that this was due to minimal security levels. Although houses of multi-occupancy accounted for less than 10% of dwellings in the enumeration districts, they made up around 25% of the total number of burglaries.

Burglary pockets within police beats

Locations X and Y make up a sub area of one police beat. This virtual community covers 458 households with a burglary rate averaging around 99 per 1000 households over the last three years. It is an area of multiple deprivation and has displayed a consistently high burglary rate over the last three years.

9. Proposed interventions

Elderly

- Target hardening – security upgrading on doors and windows (locks, door chains, lighting)
- Increase awareness of victims – crime prevention advice
- Increase vigilance of residents – expand Neighbourhood Watch, establish cocoons
- Remote guardianship – installation of senior link telephones

Houses of multiple occupancy

- Further development of data capture and information sharing processes
- Introduce HIMO regulation/registration scheme
- Develop and co-ordinate self-help scheme for tenants
- Education of victims and potential victims
- Improve security and capable guardianship within HIMO's

Locations X and Y

- Covert observations by Police and Tenancy Enforcement Unit to detect offenders
- High Visibility Policing
- Media Press Strategy
- Preparation and distribution of crime prevention literature / packages
- Crimestoppers' campaign

10. Expected impact on annual domestic burglary rate

A reduction of 25% in domestic burglary within twelve months of commencing the projects. The situation will be monitored for a further twelve months to ensure that benefits are sustained.

11. Provision of longer-term maintenance of reduced burglary rates

This project will be used as a means of 'piloting' various interventions in order to reduce the burglary problem in three carefully defined virtual communities. It is acknowledged that some interventions may fail to work in that particular context and will have to be reviewed as the project develops. At the end of the developmental process, we will have endeavoured to discover what interventions work in what contexts. In order to sustain the intended reduction in burglary, we aim to extract the valuable experience and sense of good practice gained from the three sites and transfer it to areas of similarity.

12. Costs

Total amount available is £33,300 (number of burglaries over three years x £100). A quarterly breakdown of costs is given in the project bid.

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