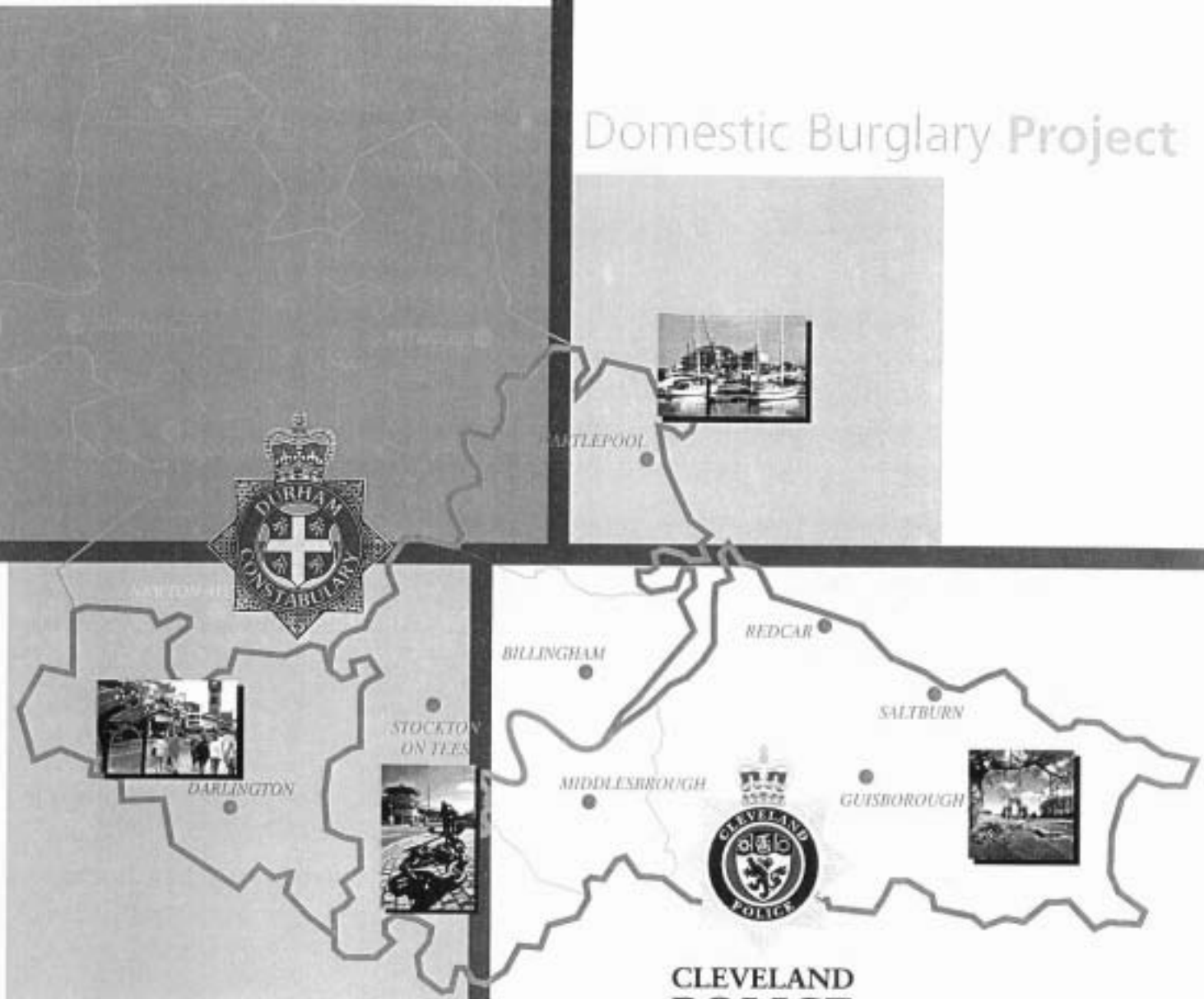


Repeat Victimisation,

Domestic Burglary Project



CLEVELAND  
POLICE

Repeat **Victimisation,**  
Domestic Burglary  
**Project**



GOVERNMENT OFFICE  
FOR THE NORTH EAST



[www.safeinteesvalley.org](http://www.safeinteesvalley.org)

The Tilley Award 2003  
Partnership Project

TILLEY AWARD 2003

REPEAT VICTIMISATION DOMESTIC BURGLARY PROJECT

PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Cleveland Police, Safe in Tees Valley and the Crime and Disorder Partnerships of:

- Middlesbrough
- Stockton
- Hartlepool
- Redcar and Cleveland
- Darlington

Endorsing Chief Officer(s):

- Cleveland Police
- Safe in Tees Valley
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

↓ *in* ..... A/acc.  
*Bob* .....  
*Al* .....

Contact Details:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
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2. Scanning
3. Analysis
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6. Conclusion

## APPENDICES

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Map illustrating the Tees Valley Region

## REPEAT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC BURGLARY

### Summary

The government has put in place targets to reduce domestic burglary by 25% over the six year period April 1999 to March 2005. Central to addressing 'repeat' incidents should be a strategy to avoid becoming a repeat.

Research by Safe in Tees Valley in 2001/2002 revealed the approach to domestic burglary repeats across the Cleveland Police area and the Darlington Division of Durham Constabulary was inconsistent and ineffective. This resulted in a poor service to victims and an inaccurate recording of crime details. Responses were often hampered by a lack of basic, timely information and no resources to address the problem. The project outline developed the initial work and aimed to:

- Develop a way forward to prevent a first time burglary victim becoming a repeat victim.
- Reduce the number of domestic burglaries through highlighting circumstances of repeats and the predictive characteristics.
- Provide timely and effective intervention with repeats thereby improving service to victims.
- Improve partnership working through information sharing.

### The problem was evidenced by:-

- Interviews with victims and completion of a comprehensive questionnaire.
- Interviews with police officers at all levels.
- Analysis of Crime data identified the high proportion of repeat victims.
- Consultation with five Crime and Disorder Partnership Managers and associated agencies.

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H.M.I.C. = Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary  
Langbaugh BCU police the Redcar and Cleveland council area

Key to the project was contact with and collection of data from repeat burglary victims. Three factors were considered when assessing vulnerability and risk:

- Property Type
- Location
- Victim Characteristics

#### **Response to the problem was achieved by:**

- Early intervention on a daily basis to identify and visit repeat victims.
- Undertake thorough security survey.
- Provide bespoke security improvement service to victims.
- Improvement of victim reassurance by spending time with victims, providing advice and points of contact with police and other agencies.
- Develop a database to establish a profile of repeat victim/property characteristics.
- Interview twelve post custody burglars.
- A daily feedback to partners agencies.
- Regular media campaigns.

#### **Impact of response and how measured?**

- 250 victims received bespoke security improvements, the remainder receiving advice and/or security lighting.
- 459 victims of repeat domestic burglary participated in the project.
- Victims reassured – evidenced by letters of thanks.
- First three months, post project term realised a
  - 36% reduction in number of repeat burglaries (357 to 262)
  - 27% reduction in first time burglaries (1913 to 1502)

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## Introduction

The Tees Valley comprises of four BCU's \* within Cleveland Police area and the Darlington Division of Durham Constabulary. This geographical area is serviced by five Local Strategic Partnerships and CDRP's \* all co-terminus with each BCU. Safe in Tees Valley a unique sub regional Community Safety Partnership acts as a catalyst for many Crime Reduction and Community Safety Initiatives.

This project had active support from:

- All five CDRP Managers
- All five Police BCU's from District Commander through to C.P.O's\*
- Victim Support Service
- Age Concern
- Youth Offending Team
- Probation Service
- Joint Strategy Unit
- Government Office North East

The project aimed to focus upon the victim, improve service to them and understand *if repeat victimisation is linked to characteristic of the person living at the target property, or does the property make it more vulnerable to repeat victimisation?*

In accordance with the SARA problem solving model, this project was subject to constant review and modification. The project funded by Government Office for the North East under the auspices of the Partnership Development Fund employed 1.5 project workers from 15<sup>th</sup> July 2002 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003.

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All partners saw this high volume crime as a priority and in line with Government Targets the CDRP's identified this within their action plans 2002-2005. (Cleveland No 4 in HMIC\*Matrix of Indicators 2001-02).

There was no BVPI\* and no clear definition of a repeat victim. It was agreed, with partners the definition of a repeat victim for purposes of this project would be:

*Any Person who has been the victim of a dwelling house burglary or attempted burglary within a rolling twelve month period*

A key part of the project was contact with and collection of data from all repeat burglary victims. Three factors were considered when assessing vulnerability and risk:

- Property Type
- Location
- Victim Characteristics

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## Scanning

The project commenced on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2002. The team embarked upon a period of consultation to establish effectiveness of existing procedures. It also sought to gain consensus as to the best way forward in bringing partners together in meeting 'repeat' issues in a co-ordinated and structured form. Both forces had three tiered responses in place to deal with repeat victims. It appeared that only Darlington and Stockton were adhering to them.

Using the SARA model a number of problems requiring remedial attention were identified:

Table 1 - Problems, Response, Result

<i>Problem</i>	<i>Response/Result</i>
BCU's* retrieving repeat victim burglary crime information	Centrally based project team provided timely and accurate crime data to BCU's on a daily basis by accessing Crimes Recording systems in both police forces
Differing levels of commitment to the problem of repeats	An agreed system of a priority approach implemented across all BCU's, i.e. victims visited with 24-48 hours, survey undertaken, security improvements carried out promptly
Confusion over information sharing	Protocols introduced servicing the flow of data between agencies and across BCU's - Police, CDRP's * and Victim Support
Poor quality of crime report details	Education and increased awareness of the need for accurate and comprehensive recording details
No accurate or detailed analysis of who, what where or when the problem was arising	Project team in association with J.S.U.* took ownership of analytical function in providing statistical data at a force, BCU and ward level. Full breakdown provided in the guise of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping - geographical distribution</li> <li>• Trends</li> <li>• Hotspots</li> <li>• Prevalence</li> <li>• Characteristics- victim/property/m.o.</li> </ul>
No funds for project to Target Harden Properties	Negotiations with police and CDRP's* ensured funding for Target Hardening

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It was accepted that these deficiencies required urgent and detailed attention. This would only be achieved if dedicated resources e.g. C.P.O's, Crime Scene Investigators, Research staff and Local Authority Community Safety Departments were committed to the project.

Ongoing consultation was the theme throughout this initiative with the Project Team providing and receiving feedback as to progress and developments at individual, group and organisational level.

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## Analysis

The following methodology was adopted by the project team in its analysis:

- Desk Research ◊
- Consultation
- Development of Working Practices
- Data Collection and Analysis Issues

Analysis confirmed that repeat domestic burglary was a significant problem across the Tees Valley, compounded by the fragmented and uncoordinated approach, evidenced across BCU's. Furthermore, inconsistent approaches by police officers and associated partners resulted in a poor service delivery to victims. It was established repeat activity across the Tees Valley mirrored trends across first time burglary offences.

As can be seen at Table 2 local first time burglary trends are replicated nationally.

Table 2 National and local domestic burglary figures

<i>Year</i>	<i>National Burglary Figure</i>	<i>Cleveland Burglary Figure</i>	<i>Durham Burglary Figure</i>
99/00	442,602	7717	4044
00/01	402,984	7138	3200
01/02	430,361	8235	4023
02/03		7321	3083

(Figure for 02/03 n/a)

### Crime Data

The project team identified a discrepancy, in that the data search of repeat victims from the Cleveland system suggested double counting. In order to ensure accuracy each record during the project term was re-examined. As a result, duplicate records were consolidated into a single record to reflect an accurate figure.

◊ See literature review in appendices section

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A 21% reduction of the original figure was confirmed after the re examination. Cleveland Police are now reviewing the situation. This will result in the introduction of an additional standard report, consolidating any double counted record.

The project team throughout the initiative maintained a manual independent system, which mirrored the findings of the re-examination. See table 3

Table 3- Repeat Burglary figures (21.8.02 - 21.01.03)

<i>District</i>	<i>Total no of burglaries per district</i>	<i>No of repeats</i>
Hartlepool	607	95
Middlesbrough	1033	233
Stockton	936	154
Langbaugh	320	36
<b>Total - Cleveland</b>	<b>2896</b>	<b>518</b>
<b>Darlington</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>17</b>

Data received from Darlington used a victim only search. Findings indicated an anomaly. By searching on location and victim, 7 additional repeat victims were identified. It is essential that all relevant searches are carried out in order to ensure an accurate reflection of the problem. This issue has been raised with senior police managers at Darlington.

### ***Repeat Burglaries***

Table 4 represents the percentage of repeat burglaries against district totals. During the project term there were 2896 offences of domestic burglary in the Cleveland area, 518 (18%) were repeat victims.

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Table 4 - % of repeats against district total (21.8.02 - 21.01.03)

<i>District</i>	<i>Total no of domestic burglaries per district</i>	<i>No of repeats</i>	<i>% of repeats against district domestic burglaries</i>
Hartlepool	607	95	16%
Middlesbrough	1033	233	22.5%
Stockton	936	154	16%
Langbaurgh	320	36	11%
Darlington	318	17	5%

Table 5 identifies BCU contributions to the problem

Table 5 - BCU % of problem (21.8.02 - 21.01.03)

<i>District</i>	<i>Total No of repeats - forcewide</i>	<i>No of repeats per district</i>	<i>% of repeats against total no of repeats - forcewide</i>
Hartlepool	518	95	18%
Middlesbrough	518	233	45%
Stockton	518	154	30%
Langbaurgh	518	36	7%
Darlington	n/a	17	n/a

Note N/A = data unavailable

### Survey Information

All identified repeat victims were visited in an attempt to bring them into the project. 70% participated and personal data together with security information was collated for analysis purposes. The Joint Strategy Unit, and a Research Officer at Safe in Tees Valley analysed crime and survey data. Survey information revealed:

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- Trends
- Hotspots
- Predictive characteristics

High crime is associated with socially deprived areas.

## Response

Through consultation at practitioner and strategic level the project was taken forward. A systematic and time banded project plan was established. The project life was nine months, incorporating a five months data collection period. Key areas within the process were:

- Project Team provided repeat crime details to each BCU on a daily basis, from computerised crime recording systems.
- Database and data sets were developed and maintained by the project team.
- Districts adopted a high priority response, delivered by C.P.O's. This response was agreed by all BCU's and CDRP's.
- When C.P.O's could not make contact with victim the details were referred to the project team who would undertake victim visits.
- Those victims who proved difficult to contact were written to on two occasions with an average of up to five visits spread between the C.P.O's and the project team.
- Bespoke target hardening was carried out with priority to vulnerable victims.
- Convicted burglars were interviewed to establish what crime prevention methods deterred them.
- All completed questionnaires were returned to project team and entered onto database for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
- Project Team attended burglary task groups and other crime initiative meetings to share good practice and provide project updates.
- To generate and maintain press/media interest.

The resulting database provided detail of trends during project activity and established a profile of repeat victim characteristics that informed intervention strategies throughout the Tees Valley sub region.

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It was considered by the Project Team that the 'offender element' played a significant part in understanding repeat domestic burglaries. *"No offender no burglary"*. A number of convicted burglars were interviewed in an attempt to establish what deters them from committing a burglary. As a result arrangements were made, through the Hartlepool Dordrecht scheme to interview convicted burglars, all of whom had served custodial sentences.

**Footnote** The Hartlepool Dordrecht Initiative is a partnership between the local Police, the Probation Service, the Health Authority and other agencies to reduce offending by persistent post custody adult burglars in the Hartlepool area.

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## Assessment

The project was costed and the project team with support of the police and local authorities ensured adequate resources were assigned to the problem, (C.P.O'S, Local Authority Community Safety Department staff and Analytical capabilities).

Ongoing consultation and feedback with partners were key elements for project direction. Formal and informal meetings were held regularly. Amendments were made to:

- a) the composition of the survey report form
- b) Project team taking over visits to victims (after accreditation by C.P.O's to undertake surveys).

A minority of victims however failed to respond to any attempts at contact. Some external surveys were therefore undertaken where property details only were obtained in an effort to gather as much information as possible for project use.

## Victims

*Is repeat victimisation linked to the characteristic of the person living at the target property?*

Single unemployed females in the 25-44 year age bracket appeared more likely to suffer a repeat attack on their property.

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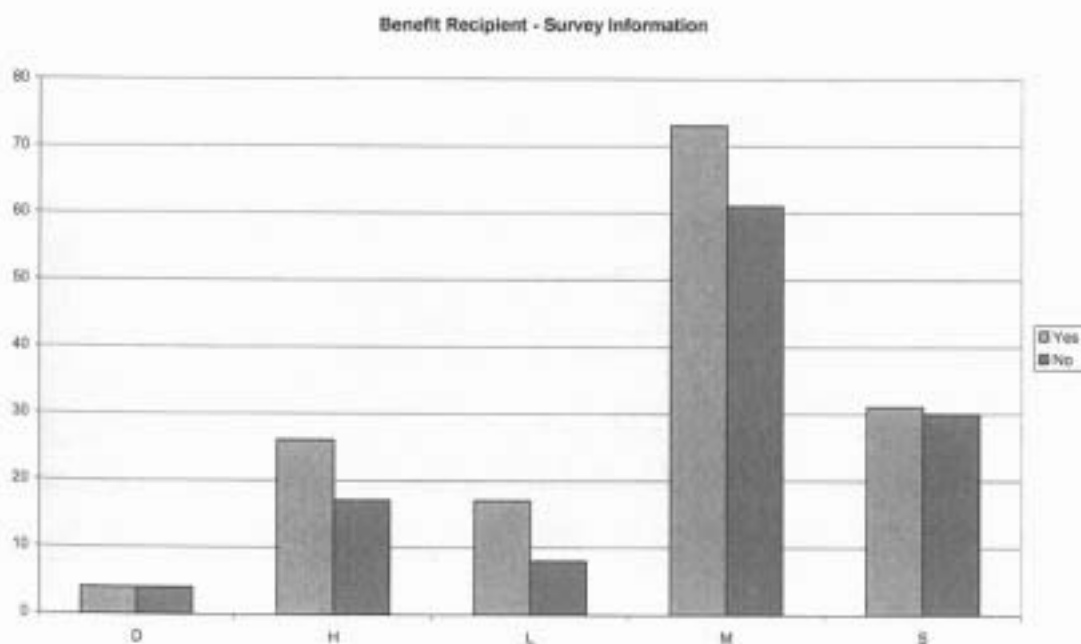
Table 6 – Gender/Age etc (21.8.02 – 21.01.03)

<i>District</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Age 25-44</i>	<i>Unemployed</i>	<i>Single</i>
Hartlepool	48%	33%	39%	19%
Middlesbrough	53%	34%	31%	34%
Stockton	43%	29%	27%	15%
Langbaugh	50%	44%	35%	29%
Darlington	50%	37%	25%	50%

### *Benefit Recipient*

Benefit recipients were more likely to become a repeat victim. This research supports this in all districts, with the exception of Darlington; where more victims were in receipt of benefit than were not. See Table 7

Table 7 – Benefit Recipient – victim survey data



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## Property

### *"Does the type of property make it more vulnerable to repeat victimisation?"*

Targeted properties were houses and more specifically older terraced properties. Methods of entry varied across the five districts and appeared to be dictated by age, style and location. Middlesbrough continued to suffer rear alleyway attacks, whereas in Hartlepool and Stockton the front door was the popular point of entry.

### *"Is vulnerability, in terms of repeat victimisation associated with specific geographic locations?"*

Domestic burglary would appear to have a concentration in town centre areas, with Middlesbrough experiencing higher levels.

- This project has shown that, albeit not exhaustive, evidence indicates that it is the geographic area, rather than the property which increases the probability of it being burgled.
- Analysis at ward level revealed that those areas with the highest burglary rates tended to experience the highest percentage of 'repeats'.
- This initiative has shown that repeat victimisation tends to occur in those areas with higher levels of poverty.
- Repeat offences also occur in areas where there are less owner occupied houses and more 'other' tenure properties, including those owned by private landlords. This suggests repeat victimisation has an association with the less stable, more transient population.

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- Of 459 properties broken into 236 were at houses over fifty years old, compared to:

Property under 10 years	= 4
Property 10-19 Years	=8
Property 20-29 years	= 22
Property 30-39 years	= 44
Property 40-49 years	= 66

Reasons range from

- Older properties tend to have wooden windows/doors which are easier for a burglar to force.
  - Many older properties are not maintained and again provide ease of opportunity for the offender.
- Window locks – the majority of victims did have window locks fitted however this has not stopped them being attacked; Middlesbrough and Langbaugh demonstrated that the preferred point of entry was via a rear window – see table 8.

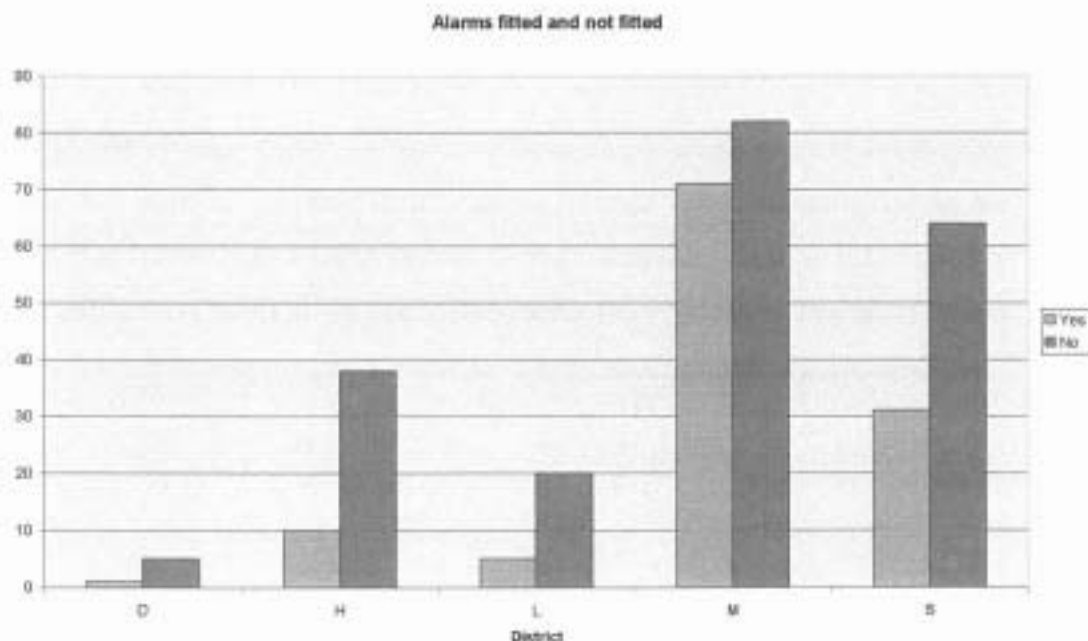
Table 8 – Entry points (21.8.02 - 21.01.03)

<i>District</i>	<i>Front door</i>	<i>Rear door</i>	<i>Side door</i>	<i>Patio door</i>	<i>Front window</i>	<i>Rear window</i>	<i>Side window</i>	<i>Window locks fitted</i>
<b>Hartlepool</b>	40%	19%	1%	5%	4%	23%	1%	28%
<b>Middlesbrough</b>	29%	22%	0.9%	.9%	4%	31%	1%	45%
<b>Stockton</b>	27%	15%	2%	7%	4%	24%	2%	40%
<b>Langbaugh</b>	20.5%	8%	nil	nil	6%	35%	9%	47%
<b>Darlington</b>	12.5%	25%	nil	nil	12.5%	25%	nil	75%

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- Point of entry into property across the five districts appeared varied and dictated by age, style and location.
- In view of the disparate points of entry consideration should be given (funding permitting) to providing a bespoke service in relation to security improvements. In essence an odd timer switch, door bolt or chain may be of some assistance, but experience has found that bespoke target hardening is the only way forward. This has been accepted by all CDRP's who are in the process of identifying funds for this purpose.
- Terraced housing is more vulnerable than any other type of housing, with mid terraced houses being the most open to attack (not end terrace property).
- Analysis has indicated more houses without alarms are attacked, as opposed to those fitted with a functioning system. Offenders interviewed were ambivalent to alarms, but did indicate a limited preference to break into property where no alarm was fitted, see table 9.

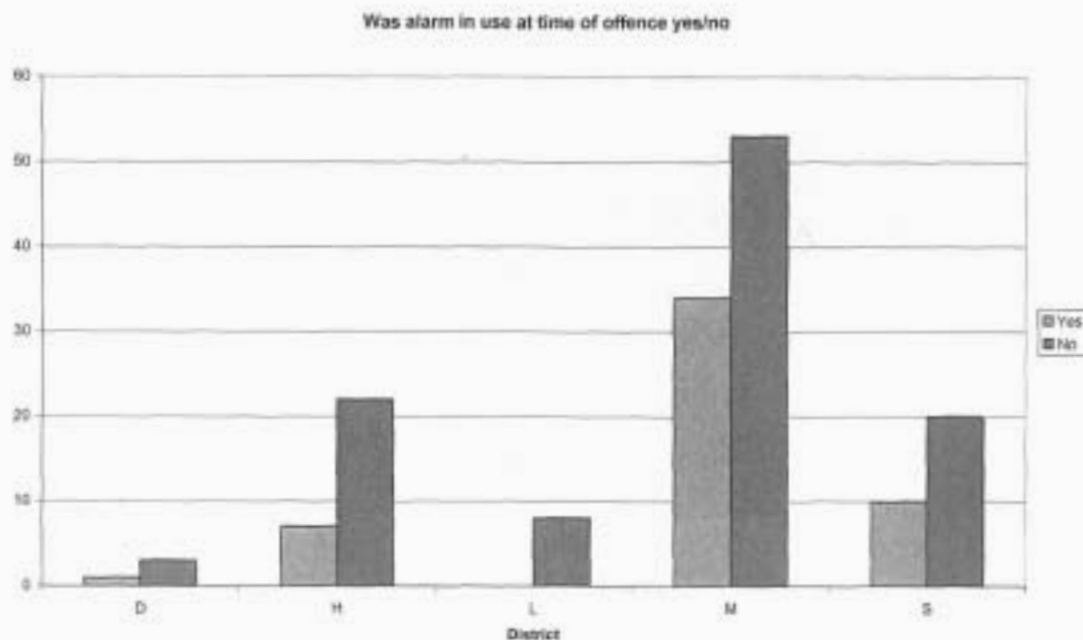
Table 9 - Alarms fitted - victim survey data



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Table 10 clearly shows that the majority of burglar alarms were not in use at the time of the repeat burglary. There is a clear need to educate the public into the benefits of using an alarm system. This was addressed by media campaigns and provision of specific crime prevention literature.

Table 10 – Alarms in use



## Preventative Measures

### Security Lighting

Whilst there has been an increase in the use of internal timer switches during the project term (Cleveland held a Light against Crime Campaign) there is still a need to educate the public in relation to the use of outside security lighting. The tables below gives clear evidence to support this. Offenders did say security lighting deterred them.

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### Timer Switch information

Table 11 – Internal timer switches

<i>District</i>	<i>Total No. not having internal timer switches (project term)</i>	<i>Total No. not having timer switches Nov 2002</i>
Hartlepool	39%	90%
Middlesbrough	57%	97%
Stockton	35%	89%
Langbaugh	56%	100%
Darlington	100%	100%

Table 2 – External security lighting

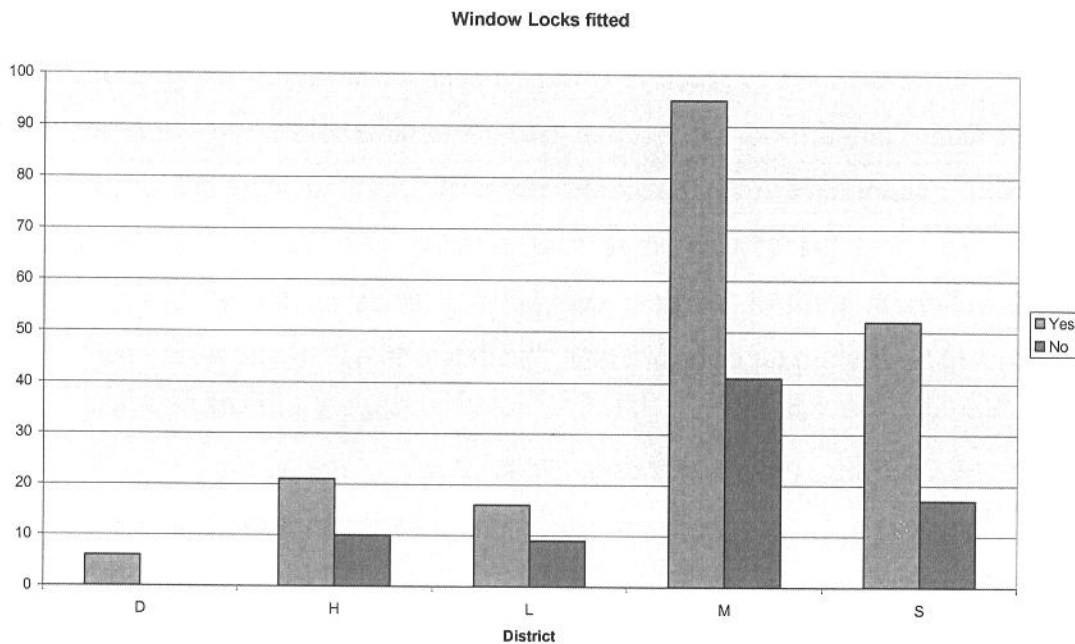
<i>District</i>	<i>Property did <u>not</u> have security lighting</i>
Hartlepool	41%
Middlesbrough	57%
Stockton	48%
Langbaugh	47%
Darlington	25%

### Window locks

41% of houses broken into did have window locks fitted – see table 13 Window access is the second most popular choice of entry by burglars. It appears that window locks are not acting as a deterrent. C.P.O's are aware of this and take note when giving advice?

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Table 13 – window locks



### Neighbourhood Watch

93% of victims interviewed were unaware if schemes existed in their area. There is a clear need to keep schemes focused and informed for them to be impactful in any crime reduction programme. The sub region is now actively seeking a co-ordinator to focus upon a more dynamic approach, with links to the National Intelligence Model.

### Repeat Offenders

Twelve interviews with offenders revealed common themes about offender behaviour:

- The majority committed burglaries in their own locality and on foot “**where they felt safe**”.
- 25% spoke of third party involvement., milkmen, taxi drivers and window cleaners were responsible for supplying details of empty houses.
- Most were opportunist and decided on the spot to select a certain property.
- Alarms do deter them, but one did speak of foaming boxes and cutting wires.

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- Double glazing did not deter them, as some double glazed windows can be 'popped' quite effortlessly.
- Security lighting does act as a deterrent. A house in darkness is classed as an open invitation. External lights such as Dusk 'til dawn lights, which create a permanent pool of light, do create problems. However Passive Infra Red lights, can be pushed aside, letting them work in darkness.
- Noise does concern them, but they are prepared to force a window/door – "who takes any notice of one thud". Once inside a property their first priority is to identify their egress.
- They will put a chair or similar object against the door in the room where they are working to frustrate any entry by the occupier.
- 70% decided not to return to the same address as they assume that the householder would have tightened up security.
- 30% returned to the same property to steal items identified on their first visit. They now know the layout of the property and felt that they had secured a successful escape route.

### Apathy

During the project it was essential to gather as much information from victims as possible. When C.P.O's failed to make contact with the victim, they referred the details to the project team for them to pursue the matter. The project team would telephone, write, cold call, leave calling cards and send an 'opt out' letter (this gives a specific appointment time when a project officer will call, putting the onus on the victim to either keep the appointment or re-arrange). When asked why they hadn't responded, the explanations offered were varied:

- Some meant to reply but had forgotten.
- Others said they could not be bothered.
- A shrug of the shoulders with no reason given.
- They had not thought it important or a priority.

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 Langbaurgh BCU police the Redcar and Cleveland council area

- “What can the Police do” – they are too busy to care.

11% failed to respond to any attempts at contact whatsoever. On a few occasions appointments were made, and although there was quite clearly somebody at home they would not answer the door. This prompts the question “why?” Police officers often have a ‘gut’ reaction to the validity of the offence. However, these ‘thoughts’ are not recorded as a matter of course.

- Officer’s should **investigate** rather than simply take a report.
- Was it a false report in the first instance? – The “victim?” uncomfortable with the extra attention given.
- Would they resist contact with anyone from an official office?
- Do they have criminal connections and will therefore oppose any contact with the police?

### **Predictive Characteristics**

Research suggests there are many characteristics that can inform partners as to ‘who’ could be a potential repeat victim of a domestic burglary.

These characteristics if recognised in the first instance, could prevent a first time burglary victim become a ‘repeat victim’.

These characteristics include:

- Single person (26%)
- Benefit recipient (32%)
- Female (49%)
- Aged 25-44 years (33%)
- Unemployed (31%)

*\*BCU – Police Basic Command Units  
CDRP – Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership  
C.P.O. – Crime Prevention Officer  
BVPI – Best Value Performance Indicator  
J.S.U. – Joint Strategy Unit  
H.M.I.C. – Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary  
Langbaugh BCU police the Redcar and Cleveland council area*

- Property over 50 year old especially Victorian back to back housing (51%).
- Terraced Housing (39%).
- Wooden windows/doors (56% & 76% respectively).
- Not owner occupied (48%).
- Entry via rear window or front door (28% & 29% respectively).
- Security Lighting/timer switches not in use 51% & 49% respectively).

This list, merely describes the typical characteristics of most personal circumstances of residents in the deprived, high burglary areas of the Tees Valley. Table 14 displays closer analysis at district level showing features most vulnerable to repeat victimisation.

*Footnote*

Percentages reflect data from survey questionnaires

- *BCU = Police Basic Command Units*
- CDRP = Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership*
- C.P.O. = Crime Prevention Officer*
- BVPI = Best Value Performance Indicator*
- J.S.U. = Joint Strategy Unit*
- H.M.I.C. = Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabulary*
- Langbaurgh BCU police the Redcar and Cleveland council area*

Table 14 – Predictive Characteristics

District	House	Terraced	End Terraced	Rented	Semi-detached	Prop 50+ years	Rear Alley	Home Entertainments equip stolen	Force rear window entry	Insecure front door entry	Timer switches	Security lighting	Unemployed	Single	Age 25-44 years	Female
Hartlepool	*	*		*		*	*	*		*			*	*	*	*
Middlesbrough	*	*		*		*	*	*	*				*	*	*	*
Stockton	*	*		*		*		*		*			*		*	*
Langbaugh	*		*	*		*		*	*				*	*	*	*
Darlington	*				*	*		*	*			*		*	*	*

Table 15 (see appendix section) also illustrates individual characteristics specific to each district but includes relevant figures. The salient points from the survey report were included. In an attempt to collect as much information as possible, some external surveys of properties were undertaken when victims were unavailable. This enabled details to be gathered which related to windows, doors natural surveillance etc however victim data could not be obtained.

Victims should be singled out for closer attention when identified as a repeat, mechanisms are required to identify and act on these indicators following first time burglaries. A truly preventative strategy would identify this vulnerable group and proactively assist them to reduce their risk before the potential event.

\* BCU = Police Basic Command Units  
 CDRP = Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership  
 C.P.O. = Crime Prevention Officer  
 BVPJ = Best Value Performance Indicator  
 J.S.U. = Joint Strategy Unit  
 H.M.I.C. = Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabulary  
 Langbaugh BCU police the Redcar and Cleveland council area

The project has made an immediate impact in the following areas:

Comparisons were made between the 1<sup>st</sup> three months of the project term and the 1<sup>st</sup> three months post project term:

- 36% reduction in repeat domestic burglary (357 to 262).
- 27% reduction in domestic burglary (1913 to 1502).
- Evidence of improved victim satisfaction in relation to service provided by all partner agencies.
- An acknowledgement by all partner agencies that the project has provided a consistent and structured way forward in tackling burglary and repeat burglary activity.

The Police Standards Unit recognising the merits of this project are supporting an opportunity for Cleveland Police to put in place a composite Force model dealing with burglary with an emphasis on repeats from report through to investigation. This pilot scheme will then be rolled out nationally to all Forces.

## Conclusions

A Director of Crime has been appointed in the Cleveland force area and has ownership of burglary. As a result of the research the following recommendations were offered to all partners as a potential way forward in reducing both first time and Repeat domestic burglary activity:

- A strategy to prevent repeat domestic burglary should incorporate an approach to prevent the first time burglary victim becoming a repeat.
- The research team identified good practice within Langbaugh, which has in place a team with a cross section of skills responding to the issue of burglary and repeat victimisation. Throughout this initiative it has been suggested other districts may wish to assess the merits of Langbaugh's approach.
- First time burglary victims should be dealt with to a consistent standard and utilising predictive characteristics potential repeat victims could be identified.
- Aide memoirs should be available to every officer ensuring consistency when dealing with burglary and repeat issues.
- Bespoke security measures for victims are essential.
- Where victims are proving difficult to contact an 'opt out' letter should be considered. This provides the victim with an appointment time when an officer will attend, thereby putting the onus upon the victim to re-arrange.
- Multi skilling officers would prevent numerous calls by staff from different departments, who may not necessarily liaise with one another to share vital information. Officers are encouraged to challenge potential spurious repeats and be robust in their questioning of 'victims'.
- Darlington Division should consider reviewing their identification criteria, e.g. undertake a location search.
- Cleveland Police to review levels of repeat victimisation in light of problems identified with double counting.
- Replacement doors and windows etc should of an appropriate standard.

- Regular analysis of burglary and repeat burglary activity needs to be a constant in terms of location and volume – the problem is fluid.
- Respond to burglary to be consistent and commensurate with variations of victim and property attacked, e.g. vulnerable victim, walk in, distraction, bogus official and void property.

## APPENDICES

1. Table 15 – Predictive Characteristics by District
2. Victim Survey Questionnaires
3. Data Protection Forms
4. Letters to Victims
5. Literature Review
6. Letters of Thanks
7. Press Articles



Table 15 – Predictive Characteristics by District

	HARTLEPOOL	MIDDLESBROUGH	STOCKTON	LANGBAURGH	DARLINGTON
<b>PROPERTY</b>					
Rented	51%	51%	37%	65%	-
Owner Occupied	-	-	-	-	50%
Over 50 years old	51%	63%	29%	63%	87%
Mix of council/ private	41%	-	-	-	-
Council/Housing Assoc	-	33%	-	-	-
Private Housing	-	-	-	-	50%
Terraced	52%	45%	27%	-	-
End Terraced	-	-	-	29%	-
Semi Detached	-	-	-	-	50%
Has rear alley	61%	45%	19%	20%	25%
House	65%	77%	65%	55%	75%
<b>MODUS OPERANDI</b>					
Entry – insecure Front door	40%	-	27%	-	-
Force rear Door	-	-	-	-	25%
Force rear window	-	31%	-	35%	25%
Distraction burglary	5%	2%	2%	nil	12%
Bogus Official	1%	2%	3%	nil	12%
Property Occupied	31%	35%	38%	18%	25%
<b>PREVENTION</b>					
Alarmed - yes	13%	33%	24%	15%	12%
External Security lights - yes	21%	21%	25%	26%	75%
Window Locks yes	28%	45%	40%	47%	75%
Property Security marked – yes	9%	5%	5%	18%	37%
Knew of Neighbourhood Watch – yes	5%	4%	12%	6%	25%
Internal timer switches – yes	12%	5%	8%	18%	nil
<b>VICTIM</b>					
24-44 years	33%	34%	33%	44%	37%
Female	48%	53%	49%	50%	50%
Unemployed	38%	-	-	35%	-
Employed	-	31%	28%	-	50%
Receiving Benefits	34%	34%	24%	50%	50%

# REPEAT BURGLARY DWELLING PROFILE FORM



## SECTION 1 – VICTIM DETAILS

Surname:  Forename(s):  DOB:  Age:

Address:

Postcode:  Contact Tel No:

**Gender:**

Male  (1)  
Female  (2)

**Victim's employment status:**

Employed  (1)  
Unemployed  (2)  
Retired  (3)  
Student  (4)  
Other  (5)

**Partner's employment status:**

Employed  (1)  
Unemployed  (2)  
Retired  (3)  
Student  (4)  
Other  (5)

**Marital status:**

Married  (1)  
Single  (2)  
Divorced/Separated  (3)  
Widowed  (4)

Ethnicity:  (Enter code)

Is the victim an asylum seeker? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Is the victim a benefit recipient? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Does the victim receive help with Council Tax payments? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Is the victim disabled/suffering from severe health problems? Yes  (1) No  (2)

## SECTION 2 – PROPERTY DETAILS

Age of property:   (Years)

Length of time at current address:   (Years)   (Months)

Total number of occupants:

Number of occupants aged under 16 years:

**Dwelling Type:**

(Select one only)

House  (1)  
Bungalow  (2)  
Flat  (3)  
Communal Home  (4)  
Domestic Garage  (5)  
Other  (6) Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Type:**

(Select one only)

Detached  (1)  
Semi Detached  (2)  
Link Detached  (3)  
Terraced  (4)  
End Terrace  (5)  
Multi-storey  (6)

**Location Type:**

(Select one only)

Private housing  (1)  
Council/Housing Association (HA)  (2)  
Mix of both  (3)

**Tenant type:**

(Select one only)

Homeowner  (1)  
Council Tenant  (2)  
HA Tenant  (3)  
Private rented  (4)  
Sheltered Accom  (5)

Does the property have good natural surveillance? Front: Yes  (1) No  (2) Rear: Yes  (1) No  (2)

Is the property well maintained? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Are the grounds well maintained? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Is the property adjacent to fields? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Is the property adjacent to a track/path? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Does the property back onto a rear alley? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Is the property in an isolated/rural area Yes  (1) No  (2)

### SECTION 3 – OFFENCE DETAILS

Force Ref No:  Date(s) of offence(s):

Time of offence:  Day of offence:

Point of entry: (Select one only)

Front Door	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	Rear Window	<input type="checkbox"/> (6)
Rear Door	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	Side Window	<input type="checkbox"/> (7)
Side Door	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	Other Door	<input type="checkbox"/> (8) Please specify _____
Patio Door	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)	Other Window	<input type="checkbox"/> (9) Please specify _____
Front Window	<input type="checkbox"/> (5)	Other entry point	<input type="checkbox"/> (10) Please specify _____

Was an implement used? Yes  (1) Please specify \_\_\_\_\_ No  (2)

Property stolen: (Tick all that apply)

None	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	Home entertainment equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> (7)
Jewelry/Ornaments	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	Garden equipment/tools	<input type="checkbox"/> (8)
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	Computing equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> (9)
Cash	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)	Sports equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> (10)
Credit/Bank cards	<input type="checkbox"/> (5)	Domestic appliances	<input type="checkbox"/> (11)
Wine/Food	<input type="checkbox"/> (6)	Other	<input type="checkbox"/> (12) Please specify _____

Approx cost of property stolen:  Approx cost of repairs to property:

Is the property alarmed? Yes  (1) No  (2) Was it in use at the time of the offence? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Was the incident an attempted burglary? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Was the incident a distraction burglary? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Did the incident involve a bogus official? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Was the property occupied at the time of the offence? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Are the premises regularly unoccupied -

Between 8 a.m. and 12 noon?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Between 12 noon and 5 p.m?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Between 9 p.m. and 12 a.m?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Between 12 a.m and 8 a.m?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)

Has the occupier been burgled before during the past 12 months? Yes  (1) No  (2)

If yes, how many times at this address:  How many times at other addresses:

## SECTION 4 - SECURITY SURVEY

**Perimeter** Does the property have a perimeter -

Fence?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Wall?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Hedge?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)

Additional information:

**Outbuildings**

Does the property have a garage?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Does the property have a shed?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Are the outbuildings attached?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Are the outbuildings alarmed?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Are the outbuildings in good repair?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Are there any other physical security measures?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)

Additional information:

**Alarm** If property is alarmed, is the alarm:

Local signaling?	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	Remote signaling?	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)
------------------	------------------------------	-------------------	------------------------------

Additional information:

**Lighting**

Does the property have security lighting? Yes  (1) No  (2)

If yes, where? (Tick all that apply) Front  (1) Rear  (2) Side  (3)

If yes, what type? (Tick all that apply) Dusk till dawn  (1) PIR  (3) Timer  (2) Switched  (4)

Is the property illuminated by street lighting? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Additional information:

**Doors**

Door type: Wood  (1) Aluminum  (2) UPVC  (3) Steel  (4) Other  (5)

Lock type: Multi  (1) 2/3 lever  (2) 5 lever  (3) Cylinder  (4)

Is the door glazed? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Is there glazing adjacent to the door? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Additional information:

**Windows** Window type: Wood  (1) Aluminum  (2) UPVC  (3) Steel  (4)

Are window locks fitted? Yes  (1) No  (2) Are the windows secure? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Additional information:

Contents

Are the home contents insured?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Is any property security marked?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Is there a safe?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Are any valuables photographed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Is the property covered by NHW?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Are any property serial numbers recorded?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)
Are any lights operated by a timer?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (1)	No <input type="checkbox"/> (2)

Additional information:

**SECTION 5 – RECOMMENDATIONS/REFERRALS**

Are other agencies to be notified? Yes  (1) No  (2)

If yes, please give details:

Are target-hardening measures required? Yes  (1) No  (2)

If yes, please give details,  
including approximate costs:

Does the occupier agree to the work? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Signature of occupant:

I agree to this information being used by Safe in Tees Valley and any appropriate third parties for the purposes of this project.

Additional information or  
observations:

Has an intelligence log been submitted? Yes  (1) No  (2)

Name of person completing form:

Signed:

Date:



**CLEVELAND  
POLICE**

**SAFE IN TEES VALLEY  
TARGET-HARDENING PROJECT**

**AUTHORISATION TO PASS INFORMATION TO ABOVE PROJECT**

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

TELEPHONE NUMBER.....

Crime No.....

**(READ TO VICTIM)**

'This is (insert name). I understand that recently you were a victim of burglary/attempted burglary (delete as appropriate). Cleveland Police are engaged in a partnership with Safe in Tees Valley who are in a position to visit your home to conduct a security survey of your home with a possibility of arranging, free of charge to you, the installation of certain security measures which hopefully will stop you being the victim of any further crime. The reason I am ringing you is that it is a requirement under Data Protection legislation that before I can pass on your details to Safe in Tees Valley I must have your consent.

Do you wish me to pass on your details?

ANSWER YES

NO

I (insert name), an employee of Cleveland Police hereby certify that the above named authorised me via a telephone conversation to pass on details of the above numbered crime report to (Michelle Evans/Brian Neale) an employee of Safe in Tees Valley.

TIME.....DATE.....

Signed.....



**SAFE IN TEES VALLEY  
TARGET-HARDENING PROJECT**

**AUTHORISATION TO PASS INFORMATION TO ABOVE PROJECT**

NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

Crime No.....

**READ TO VICTIM)**

'This is (insert name) of Durham Constabulary at Darlington Police Office. I understand that recently you were a repeat victim of burglary. Durham Constabulary are engaged in a partnership with Safe in Tees Valley who can arrange, free of charge to you, the installation of certain security measures which hopefully will stop you being the victim of any further crime. The reason I am ringing you is that it is a requirement under Data Protection legislation that before I can pass on your details to Safe in Tees Valley I must have your consent.

Do you wish me to pass on your details?'

ANSWER      YES                                  NO

I (insert name), of Durham Constabulary hereby certify that the above named authorised me via a telephone conversation to pass on details of the above numbered crime report to Michelle Evans/Brian Neale an employee of Safe in Tees Valley.

DATE:    TIME:

Signed.....



## REPEAT BURGLARY DWELLING PROJECT



Safe in Tees Valley  
Third Floor  
Christine House  
Thornaby  
Stockton On Tees  
TS17 6DA

Tel: 01642 306699

Date

Dear

I was very sorry to here that you have recently been the victim of a domestic burglary. Our records show that your property has been targeted more than once over the past 12 months. National analysis of domestic burglaries has highlighted the potential vulnerability of burglary victims being re-victimised within a short period of time unless preventative action is taken. By looking at your current level of home security we can perhaps identify areas for improvement and thereby reduce the risk of a repetition.

As part of a scheme administered by Safe in Tees Valley and funded by the Government Office for the North East, a project team is offering repeat burglary victims the opportunity of having a police/project officer attend their home to carry out a brief security survey. The survey will take about 15 minutes and is **free of charge**. We will then offer you advice on how to make your home more secure and you may be eligible to have some free security improvements carried out. It is entirely at your discretion whether you act upon the advice offered, but if you do **it will reduce the possibility of you becoming a victim of burglary again**.

I would be obliged if you would contact me on the above number or return the reply slip enclosed so that a visit can be arranged. All officers will carry proof of identity and any information gathered will be treated in the strictest confidence.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Inspector Graham Strange**





## REPEAT BURGLARY DWELLING PROJECT



Safe in Tees Valley  
 Third Floor  
 Christine House  
 Thornaby  
 Stockton On Tees  
 TS17 6DA

Tel: 01642 306685

date

Dear

I was very sorry to here that you have recently been the victim of a house burglary. Our records show that your property has been targeted more than once over the past 12 months. National figures on house domestic burglaries has highlighted the fact that victims have the potential to become a victim again within a short period of time unless preventative action is taken. By looking at your current level of home security we can perhaps identify areas for improvement and thereby reduce the risk of a repetition.

As part of a scheme administered by Safe in Tees Valley and funded by the Government Office for the North East, a project team is offering repeat burglary victims the opportunity of having a police/project officer attend their home to carry out a brief security survey. The survey will take about 15 minutes and is **free of charge**. We will then offer you advice on how to make your home more secure and you may be eligible to have some free security improvements carried out. It is entirely at your discretion whether you act upon the advice offered, but if you do **it will reduce the possibility of you becoming a victim of burglary again**.

A project Officer will visit you on..... If this is inconvenient could you contact me on the above telephone number.

All officers will carry proof of identification & any information gathered will be treated in the strictest confidence.

I look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely

**Michelle Evans**

## Literature Review

### National Policing Plan 2003-2006

### Calling Time on Crime July 2000

### Policing a New Century a Blue Print for Reform

### Cleveland Police Authority Policing Plan 02-03

### Community Safety Action Plans for 2002 – 2005

- Darlington
- Middlesbrough
- Stockton
- Hartlepool
- Redcar and Cleveland

### Police Research

- Group Repeat Victimisation Taking Stock [REDACTED]
- Biting Back Reducing repeat Victimisation Huddersfield [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- Biting Back 11 Reducing Repeat victimisation Huddersfield [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- The BRG Burglary Manuel [REDACTED]
- Preventing Repeat Victimisation The Police officers Guide [REDACTED]
- Solving Residential burglary [REDACTED]
- Combating Burglary an evaluation of three strategies [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- Initial Scene Visits to House Burglaries [REDACTED]
- Crime Prevention Unit Series paper 51 Burglary Reduction: Findings from safer cities schemes [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

### Home Office

- Crime Reduction Toolkits Repeat Victimisation 8
- Crime Reduction Series Paper 5 Repeat victimisation Snapshot [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

- Crime Reduction Series Paper 7 Developing Crime Reduction Plans / [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
- National Board for Crime Prevention Wise After the Event Tackling Repeat  
Victimisation
- Research Study 207 The Road to Nowhere the Evidence for Travelling Criminals  
[REDACTED]

**United States Department of Justice** Burglary of Single-Family Houses [REDACTED]

Repeat Victimisation and the Policing of Communities [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Kirklees Repeat Victimisation Strategy Review [REDACTED]

HMIC Inspection Report – Cleveland Police 2000/2001

Hartlepool Community Safety Initiative Belle Vue Rift House East Final Report *M*

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

10<sup>th</sup> February 2003

PC Mick Garvey  
Crime Prevention Officer and  
Architectural Liaison Officer  
Middlesbrough Police Office  
Dunning Road  
Middlesbrough  
TS1 2AR

Dear PC Garvey

Thank you so very much for all the assistance you have given me since I had two burglaries.

I really appreciate the two dusk to dawn lights that you had fitted for me. Please would you also thank [REDACTED] for managing to obtain funds to have a gate fitted between the house and the garage. [REDACTED] has done an excellent job, and I feel much more secure.

I can't express how I really feel about the assistance you have given me and it is truly appreciated. Thank you very much!

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Dear pc mcGravey.

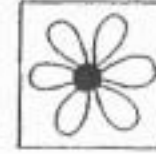
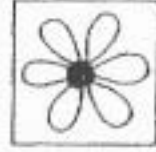
I would just like to say thank you, I have now had my House alarm and security light fitted. I now feel secure in my home again, all this Thanks to the kindness shown towards me by yourself and your staff.

Thanks again.



To P.C Mick McGravey

" Just a note to say "  
Thank You



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## Multiple burglary victims quizzed for research project

A PROJECT aimed at stamping out the misery of repeat burglaries for some of the most vulnerable householders in Darlington and Cleveland is up and running.

The project - conceived and developed by the Safe in Tees Valley organisation - involves detailed research to identify characteristics of vulnerable households in order to develop models for intervention to prevent them becoming repeat victims.

It has been financed by the Government Office for the North-East and has the full support of Cleveland and Darlington police.

Other partners contributing to the project include the crime and disorder prevention partnerships of Stockton, Darlington, Redcar and Cleveland, Middlesbrough and Hartlepool, Victim Support, Age Concern and Cleveland probation service's youth offending team.

Project manager Brian Neale, his team and members of the five police divisions have already started visiting people who have reported more than one break-in at their homes.

Mr Neale said: "Participation is entirely voluntary but the response has been excellent and the team is confident of the full co-operation of the victims."

"While the full report of the research will not be published until March, the data collected is already informing new security measures at local level."

He added: "To be burgled once is bad enough, but when it happens two or even three times then it can have a terrible effect on people's lives."

"While this is proving to be a harrowing project for us, we do have the huge incentive of knowing the information we gather will be invaluable in helping the police protect a really vulnerable section of our society."

*De J 8/1/02*

Wednesday, November 20, 2002

## Homing in on burglars

BURGLARY victims are to get a personal home security overhaul.

The Safe in Tees Valley project, involving the police and councils, has found that one in five break-ins in the area are repeat burglaries.

Now the £26,000 scheme is to address fear of crime and make it tough for crooks to turn to "easy" targets.

Repeat burglary victims will be approached by crime prevention officers, who will survey the property and give advice to beef up security.

Extra funding may also allow for new locks, lights, alarms and other security measures to be installed.

It is hoped victims can be approached as soon as 24 hours after the last incident.

Project manager Brian Neale said: "We want to make victims feel someone is

taking them seriously.

"We need to reduce fear of crime as well as actual incidents. People must be aware of how to minimise the possibility of being a victim and take responsibility for themselves."

The Repeat Burglary Scheme will also use the Home Office funding to look at daily crime reports and analyse why crime occurs. It is hoped patterns can be established so better solutions can be found.

John Bentley, programme director of the Safe in Tees Valley project, said: "This is all about the victim, finding out who is at risk and applying science to prevent it happening again."

It is hoped the attention will also expose spurious claims with councils and insurance companies. The project runs until April 2003.

# Project team aims to help police reduce burglaries

A FORMER police inspector is hoping to come up with a blueprint to help police and councils defeat burglars.

Retired Cleveland Police officer Brian Neale, his project team and police officers are visiting the victims of repeat burglaries in an attempt to build models showing police and councils where and how resources should be directed.

The brainchild of the crime-

teristics have already emerged. The worst hit areas are Middlesbrough and Stockton, followed closely by Hartlepool, with east Cleveland and Darlington bringing up the rear.

Burglars are targeting town centre terraced houses and housing estates, rather than the leafy suburbs.

"One characteristic of burglaries is they are tending to be concentrated in areas that

have a higher deprivation than others," said project manager Mr Neale.

"If you tend to live in an end terraced house and are out for a significant part of the day, at work or study, you are more likely to become a victim."

A person living alone or a single parent can be particularly vulnerable.

"To be burgled once is bad enough, but when it happens two or even three times then

it can have a terrible effect on people's lives," he said.

"Whilst this is proving to be a harrowing project for us, we do have the huge incentive of knowing the information we gather will be invaluable in helping the police protect a really vulnerable section of our society."

Mr Neale added: "The feedback is people are pleased that we are taking burglary seriously and that we are

looking at core issues."

Crime prevention measures are being taken while the survey is running and have defeated one burglar in his attempt to break into the same house within hours.

Mr Neale said: "What we are looking to do is reduce the incidence of burglary and, even more, reduce repeat burglary, and to reassure the public that we are there working in partnership."

# Crook table shame

By MIKE UNDERWOOD

CLEVELAND is at the summit of a national league of shame for producing prolific crooks.

The area has double the national average of repeat offenders per 1,000 people and sits second in the table well ahead of larger crime hotbeds such as the London Metropolitan, Greater Manchester and Thames Valley areas.

But police chiefs are taking action to drastically slash the number of persistent offenders.

Cleveland Police Authority chairman Ken Walker said the authority will work closely with the police, and other agencies in the criminal justice system as part of a Government crackdown on repeat offenders.

He said: "The figures on the level of persistent offenders within the Cleveland force reflect the general challenge of high crime levels we face."

Mr Walker added: "The whole emphasis of our approach is based on 'fast tracking' persistent offenders

## High number of repeat offenders on Teesside



The whole emphasis of our approach is based on 'fast tracking' persistent offenders through the system

— Cleveland Police Authority Chairman Ken Walker

through the system - from the speedy collection and processing of any forensic evidence required to getting them before the courts.

"Of course, we have to recognise that in the end the responsibility for the speed with which offenders can be processed relies not solely on the police but on the criminal justice system as a whole."

Cleveland has 843 persistent offenders from 556,000 residents - 1.5 people per 1,000 population.

Cleveland Police say repeat offenders

are fuelled by crippling drug addictions.

A spokeswoman said: "We are constantly going out and re-arresting the same people who are re-offending to feed their drug habits - it's a vicious circle."

Government reforms designed to narrow the "justice gap" - a higher number of crimes committed compared with the number of arrests made - come into effect from April 1.

All police forces will employ a persistent offender scheme which will support the criminal justice system in

dealing more effectively with the most prolific offenders.

The scheme will be implemented through new local criminal justice boards which will ensure all agencies involved in bringing persistent offenders to justice work together effectively.

A persistent offender is someone over 18-years-old who has been convicted of six or more offences in the last 12 months.

But it is not all bad news for the region's crimefighters. A recent report revealed Cleveland's courts are responding to the challenge of reducing persistent young offenders numbers.

Teesside's magistrates and judges took an average of 64 days to sentence young offenders after their arrests between July and September.

That figure is four below the national average of 68 days and seven below the national target of 71 days.

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# Getting Smarter

## Burglary-busting team on the road to success

By JUNE KELLY

A DRIVE to stop repeat burglaries has proved an overwhelming success.

The project run by the Vale in Tees Valley partnership identifies vulnerable households - those hit more than once - and offers help and advice to stop the thieves. New Rover Mercedes, of Preston Park, Stockton, have donated a "Smart" car to help with the work of the team.

The car was collected by Gerry McBride, crime prevention officer with Cleveland Police, and will be used to visit repeat burglary victims throughout Tees Valley to gather information and offer help.

Sales manager Stephen Chisholm said: "We wanted the team to be able to promote the extremely valuable work that it is doing and to their fullest, which is why we supplied the car."

Sole trader Vale's Brian Nisbet said: "To be burgled once is bad enough, but when it happens two or even three times it can have a terrible effect on people's lives."

"While this is proving to be a rewarding project for us we do have the big advantage of knowing the information we gather will be invaluable in helping the police protect a residential area from

repeat burglaries identified by the project."

They immediately visited the address and carried out a security check where improvements identified were made. A further attack was prevented at the address which proved unsuccessful as a result of the improvements. One person was arrested and charged.

The initial findings of the scheme show that from August 21 to the end of October this year there were 106 repeat burglaries in the Vale - that's one in five households. A resource manager at Vale has had the car with improvements carried out



ADVICE: Crime prevention officer Gerry McBride collected the Smart car