

Stand Up to Crime - burglary prevention campaign

A multi-faceted burglary prevention campaign designed to deter offending by cutting off the sale of stolen goods and making communities safer.

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Key details

Does it work?	Untested – new or innovative
Focus	Prevention
Topic	Crime prevention Neighbourhood crime
Organisation	Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
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Region	East Midlands
Partners	Police Community safety partnership Local authority
Stage of practice	The practice is implemented.
Start date	July 2024

Key details

Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Communities Victims

Aim

Stand Up to Crime aims to:

- encourage the community to make positive security decisions
- connect more effectively with the public by providing easy to follow information of security routines
- encourage co-operation with local second-hand dealers to cut off the sale of stolen goods
- scale into rural areas to create a more consistent crime prevention across the county

Intended outcome

- reduction in burglary and theft reports in Kettering and Northampton
- reduction in the sale of stolen goods
- increase in the recovery of stolen goods and returns to owners
- increase in trust and confidence with the local community

Description

The purpose of Stand Up to Crime is to help reduce residential burglary within Northamptonshire. This includes the introduction of a comprehensive crime reduction campaign which is designed to support the public and have the necessary funding as well as infrastructure support to maximise success.

This approach aims to provide more reassurance to the public, whilst providing local police with more lines of enquiry should items be stolen and subsequently found. Custody and property processes involve routinely checking for markings or identifiers and all officers are issued with ultraviolet (UV) torches. If no markings are found, Northamptonshire Office of Police and Fire Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) routinely checks the National Mobile Property Register for lost and stolen

property.

Secure it, Mark it, Record it – community protection initiative

Stand Up to Crime has been piloted in two lower layer super output areas (LSOAs) of Northamptonshire; these are locations identified to be disproportionately affected by residential burglary. The force, supported by partnership agency staff visited each household within the LSOAs to encourage occupants to follow three simple steps - “Secure it, Mark it, Record it.” This process was supported by partnerships, including colleagues from the West Northamptonshire Council, Neighbourhood Watch and Fire and Rescue service. Each home within the identified area was offered a unique burglary prevention pack.

The practice has been funded with £150k from the Safer Streets 5 funding. This included buying the necessary infrastructure to aide routine checking in custody/property suites.

Secure it:

- supply crime prevention products, from timer switches, alarms, and sticker deterrents
- burglary pack supplied with a checklist to encourage positive security routines
- encourage engagement with Northamptonshire Talking and reporting through Crime Stoppers with guidance

Mark it:

- the free crime prevention pack contains a residential Smartwater kit - a traceable liquid and a unique code, which can be used to identify the property's owner
- the force demonstrates how to mark property, encouraging more positive interactions around crime prevention between the force and members of the public

Record it:

- in addition to tracking a physical marking, police can also reunite items back to their owners if items have been registered to Immobilise, a free service allowing for the recording of property serial numbers and unique identifiers

- stolen property can be checked against the National Mobile Police Register, which is linked to Immobilise

The OPFCC also provided the force with a further three thousand Smartwater property marking kits that could be used anywhere in the county to help tackle future residential burglary hotspots.

We Don't Buy Crime – reducing the sale of stolen goods

The force will imminently visit thirty-five second-hand dealers within the Northamptonshire area to ensure their buy-in to prevent the illegal sale of stolen property. Each dealer will be provided with a unique pack, which contains information on:

- Northamptonshire Talking to help police disseminate stolen property,
- CheckMEND (free checks for stolen property)
- UV torches
- immobilise for good resale practice
- 'We Don't Buy Crime' signs to display as a deterrence measure

Crime prevention in a box scheme

To further support the campaign, the force plans to provide villages within the county with community safety boxes. These boxes will contain crime prevention information around fly tipping and speeding, signs, property marking tools, and grant scheme information. This will provide a more consistent crime prevention offering to the rural community, whilst sending a powerful deterrent through consistent signage.

Community engagement

To help support the rollout of the initiative, the force has used social media to provide the community with further information and encourage them to get involved. An internal facing video can be provided upon request with the practice contact.

Evaluation

An evaluation is planned and will be led by Northamptonshire OPFCC.

The OPFCC plans to evaluate effectiveness of the campaign after 12 months of it going live. This work will be shared with the Home Office.

The force aims to focus on burglary data before and after the implementation and will look at any observed displacement effects to nearby areas.

Overall impact

It is currently too early to assess the overall impact. However, the force has received valuable feedback from the community in response to the campaign. Examples of this include:

“The Stand Up to Crime initiative is very welcome. It is reassuring to know that the police are being proactive with the community...”

“I would just like to say that I applaud this incentive! The two officers were polite, patient, and professional as they explained how to use the box of goodies provided. The DNA ink is something I've been meaning to do for some years and now I can!”

“Great initiative, well publicised, in a visible location, with plenty of opportunities to collect my pack”.

Learning

Routine checking of items in each police department has been an ongoing challenge. This is due to the number of checks that must be conducted. For example, checking every offender who comes through custody (holding bay) and charge desks (emptying their pockets of phones and devices) and checks done on those items. To ensure these processes and routines continue, the force have appointed a chief inspector to oversee them. Their role includes capturing information on markings at the point crimes are recorded.

The force has achieved results of offenders being linked to stolen property, but more needs to be seen.

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