

Audio advertisement on burglary prevention advice

A targeted 12-week audio advertisement campaign, delivering crime prevention information to identified burglary hotspots.

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Key details

Does it work?	Untested – new or innovative
Focus	Prevention
Topic	Crime prevention Digital Neighbourhood crime
Organisation	South Yorkshire Police
HMICFRS report	PEEL 2023–25 Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy: An inspection of South Yorkshire Police
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Region	North East
Partners	Police

Key details

Stage of practice	The practice is implemented.
Start date	April 2025
Completion date	July 2025
Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Communities

Aim

To use audio advertising to provide burglary prevention advice in specific geographic postcodes.

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of the audio advertisement are to:

- improve residents' understanding on living in an area at high risk for burglary
- improve residents' understanding on how to deter and prevent burglaries
- reduce the number of burglaries with the targeted postcodes

Description

South Yorkshire Police (SYP) has one of the highest rates for burglary in England and Wales. A review of two years' worth of force data on the number of burglary cases in individual areas revealed that four had disproportionately high rates. In some cases, this was ten times higher than nearby areas. Further analysis conducted by SYP also revealed that these areas had been consistent hotspots for the previous five years.

Developing the advertisement campaign

SYP's media team worked with Global to develop a 30-second audio advertisement on burglary prevention advice. Global used voice actors to record advice on how to deter and prevent burglaries. The audio advert also signposted the public to the SYP crime prevention page for further detailed advice. In agreement with Global, SYP now own the advertisement for future use.

Within force, the project lead (a detective chief inspector) had consulted with the neighbourhood policing lead, neighbourhood crime (NHC) strategic lead and the communications team on what information should be included in the media campaign.

The audio advert was approved by the NHC strategic lead and the SYP media team.

Roll out of the advertisement campaign

Global distributed the audio campaign over 12 weeks via podcast, digital radio adverts and streaming services. Global and SYP had agreed that a 12-week advertising campaign was an appropriate time frame to share the key messages. The audio advert was only available to individuals in the areas identified with a high number of burglary cases.

The advert was supported by other crime prevention tactics, such as home visits. Bespoke analysis packs were also provided to neighbourhood officers by force analysts to aid the roll out of the initiative.

Cost

The initiative was allocated £7,100 from the deputy chief constable. The creation of the audio advert cost £500 and the remaining £6,600 funded the 12-week advertising campaign.

Evaluation

An evaluation looking into the engagement of the advert was conducted during the summer of 2025 and was led by SYP's performance and governance team.

The performance and governance team used a quantitative approach to determine its reach and whether the advert was cost effective.

The evaluation results showed:

- 30% of the target population (29,969 people) heard the advert
- the advert was streamed 410,334 times, equating to an average of reaching each person 13.6 times
- based on the number of streams, the cost of the advertisement equates to 1.75 pence per advert and 23.85 pence per person.

The evaluation revealed that the largest predictor of adopting new security measures, was whether someone was already aware they lived in a high burglary area before talking to officers.

Overall impact

- officers have received positive feedback on the public's interactions with the audio advert
- it is difficult to assess the individual impact of the audio advertisement, as it was part of several initiatives aimed at preventing and deterring burglaries
- the focus remains on delivering crime prevention advice to hotspot areas and the initiative is part of long-term work to reduce the number of burglaries
- to date in 2025, there has been 175 fewer burglary cases than during the same period the previous year

Learning

- SYP faced challenges with the force single online home (SOH) website. They were unable to collect data on the number of website visits. This would have supported the demonstration of impact, rather than highlighting the reach of the audio advert.
- It is essential to ensure that internal teams collaborate to enable the launch of the audio advert.
- SYP have since used audio advertisements for other campaigns, such as a theft of motor vehicle series and the Police Race Action Plan project work on recruitment.

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