

<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY &amp; ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL</b>	<b>DATE</b> 17 September 2020	<b>ITEM NO</b> 8
<b>TITLE</b> Statutory Scrutiny of Safer Greenwich Partnership: Burglary	<b>WARD (S)</b> All	
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b> Director of Housing and Safer Greenwich	<b>CABINET MEMBER</b> Community Safety & Environment	
<b>DECISION CLASSIFICATION</b> Non Key		

## 1. **Decision required**

This report makes the following recommendations to the decision-maker:

- 1.1. The Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel is asked to review and note the development and delivery of the Safer Greenwich Partnership's work to address all forms of burglary.

## 2. **Links to the Royal Greenwich high level objectives**

- 2.1 This report relates to the Council's agreed high level objectives as follows:
  - A Safer Greenwich
  - A Great Place to Be
  - A Strong Vibrant and Well-run Borough

## 3. **Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 3.1 One of the responsibilities of the Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel is the review and/or scrutiny of decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the Council or of the relevant Chief Officer of Police of their crime and disorder functions. In its role as the Crime and Disorder Committee the Panel may co-opt additional people, request information from the Community Safety Partnership (known as the SGP) and require the attendance of representatives from the CSP to give evidence or answer questions at its meetings.
- 3.2 The Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel fulfils this function by receiving a report into a specific aspect of the SGP at one meeting per year. For this municipal year, this will be on the meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel has requested that the report for this municipal year cover the partnership's priority of Burglary.

3.3 This report provides an update on the work undertaken through the Partnership Burglary plan and provide statistical information. The Covid-19 Commercial Burglary risk mitigation is also included to account for the lockdown period.

#### 4. **Introduction and Background**

4.1 Burglary is one of three local crime priorities agreed for Greenwich in 2019/20 between RBG, the Borough Command Unit and MOPAC. It was recommended and agreed for burglary to remain a priority for 2020/21.

4.2 There is a long history of partnership between police and RBG on burglary and the present work is best represented by the partnership burglary joint action plan given at Appendix A. The lead sits primarily with the police, in particular the Chief Inspector and Inspector for Neighbourhoods, but there are many ways RBG services can contribute, especially in the section of the plan on prevention.

#### 5. **Overview of Burglary**

5.1 Burglary is the theft, or attempted theft, from premises where access is not authorised. Damage to a premise that appears to have been caused by a person attempting to enter to commit a burglary, is also counted as burglary. Residential and commercial burglaries are distinguished by the function of the building.

5.2 Residential Burglary is where items are taken or attempted to be taken without permission from inside the home, following illegal entry. This also includes sheds and garages.

5.3 Commercial Burglary is the entering of a shop, store; office building, or any other commercial building with the intent to take items.

5.4 Distraction Burglary, otherwise known as Artifice Burglary is defined as “Any crime where a falsehood, trick or distraction is used on an occupant of a dwelling to gain, or try to gain, access to the premises in order to commit burglary.” This type of burglary is also known as ‘doorstep burglary’ and are crimes often carried out by bogus callers and rogue traders who call uninvited at homes under the guise of legitimate businesses or trade persons. Victims realise they had money and/or valuables stolen after the caller has made an excuse to come to the home.

5.5 This report will focus on residential and non-residential burglary.

## 6. **Levels of Burglary**

- 6.1 Originally, this report was due to be presented at the April Scrutiny meeting, however due to Covid 19, was cancelled. For this reason, quarter 4 2019/20 performance data is included, as well as quarter 1 2020/21 data for a more up to date burglary picture.
- 6.2 There were 2,276 total Burglary Offences in Royal Greenwich in the 12 months April 2019 to March 2020, a decrease of -11.1% (-284) on the previous 12 months. The MPS recorded a decrease of -4.1% over the same period. Royal Greenwich was 'ranked' 15<sup>th</sup> for the level of offences in that 12 month period (where 1 is the borough with the lowest level of offences and 32 is the highest), which was the same ranking as in the previous 12 months.
- 6.3 There were 1,609 Residential Burglary Offences in Royal Greenwich in the 12 months April 2019 to March 2020, a decrease of -17.1% (-331) on the previous 12 months. The MPS recorded a decrease of -4.4% over the same period. Royal Greenwich was 'ranked' 14<sup>th</sup> for the level of offences in the last 12 months (where 1 is the borough with the lowest level of offences) compared to 16<sup>th</sup> in the previous 12 months.
- 6.4 There were 667 Non-Residential Burglary Offences in Royal Greenwich in the 12 months April 2019 to March 2020, an increase of +7.6% (+47) on the previous 12 months. The MPS recorded a decrease of -3% over the same period. Royal Greenwich was 'ranked' 24<sup>th</sup> for the level of offences in the last 12 months (where 1 is the borough with the lowest level of offences) compared to 19<sup>th</sup> in the previous 12 months.
- 6.5 There were 1,881 Burglary Offences in Royal Greenwich in the 12 months July 2019 to June 2020, decrease of -33% (925) on the previous 12 months. The MPS recorded a decrease of -15.3% over the same period. Royal Greenwich was 'ranked' 10<sup>th</sup> for the level of offences in that last 12 month duration (where 1 is the borough with the lowest level of offences) compared to 22<sup>nd</sup> the previous year.
- 6.6 There were 1,385 Residential Burglary Offences in Royal Greenwich in the 12 months July 2019 to June 2020, a decrease of -34.1% (-718). The MPS recorded a decrease of -12.7 over the same period. Royal Greenwich was ranked 11<sup>th</sup> for the level of offences in that 12 month period, compared to 19 the previous year.

- 6.7 There were 492 Non-Residential Burglary offences in Royal Greenwich in the 12 months July 2019 to June 2020, with a decrease of -29.4% (-207). The MPS recorded a decrease of -14.8% over the same period. Royal Greenwich was ranked 13<sup>th</sup> for the level of offences in the 12 month period, compared to 14 the previous year.
- 6.8 Both Quarter 4 2019/20 and Quarter 1 2020/21 figures show a decrease in burglary figures overall.
- 6.9 It is important to note that the Covid-19 lockdown period naturally would have had an impact on the residential burglary figures due to everyone being at home, not providing as much opportunity for criminals to offend. It was predicted that commercial burglary figures would have seen an increase due to the businesses being closed through that period, however the figures show there were no significant increases in non-residential burglary.

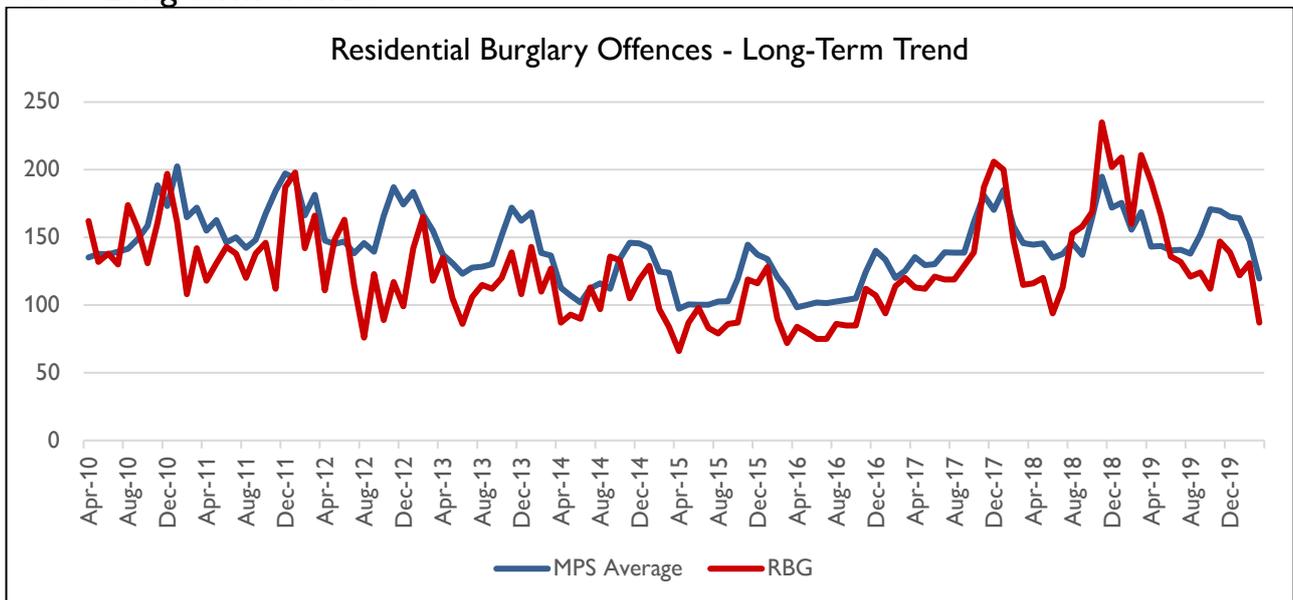
**Residential Burglary**

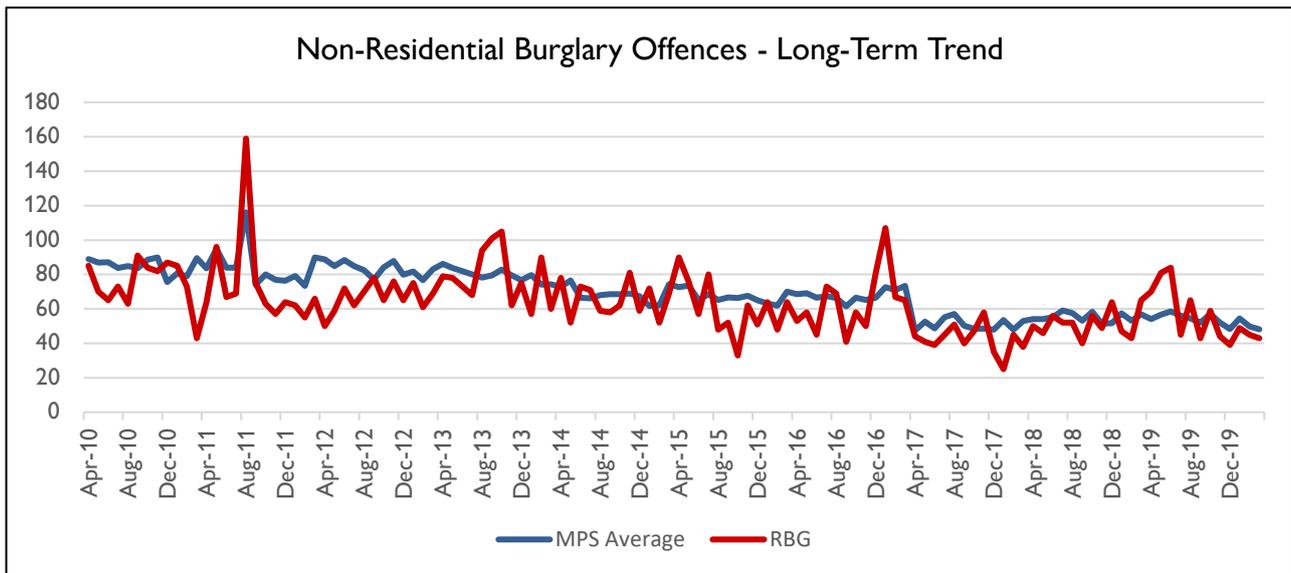
Year	Apr	May	Jun
2018/19	116	120	94
2019/20	191	166	136
2020/21	70	96	107

**Non-Residential Burglary**

Year	Apr	May	Jun
2018/19	50	46	56
2019/20	70	81	84
2020/21	25	18	24

**6.10 Long term trends.**





## 7. **Partnership Plan**

7.1 The Home Office and National Crime Agency endorse the use of the '4 P' approach to tackling crime and disorder. This is also the action plan model the Police use. As such, the Safer Greenwich Partnership Burglary plan is structured under this model and encompasses both residential and non-residential burglary. The 4 P's are:

- Pursue
- Prevent
- Protect
- Prepare

7.2 The Safer Greenwich Partnership Burglary Plan is attached in Appendix A.

## 8. **Pursue**

8.1 The Pursue element of the action plan focuses on enforcement measures to target offenders and planned operations to tackle burglary.

8.2 Over 2019/2020, the Police Borough Command Unit (BCU) have been running operations including Operation Vespinae and Operation Blixem (Autumn / Winter) to tackle burglary. Extra funding and resource was successfully applied for to tackle burglary in Greenwich, especially residential burglary within the MPS. Tactics for these include plain clothed officers in unmarked cars in burglary hotspot areas, arrest of known offenders and those identified by the forensics team and regular bail checks. There have also been

proactive operations linking in with other Borough Command Units and neighbouring county forces.

- 8.3 As a result of the BCU operations, there were 90 arrests made for burglary from Jan 2020 – March 2020. 67 of those arrested were charged. Dealing with offenders has proven to be in line with Greenwich's reduction in offences and increase in detections.
- 8.4 Operation Neptune/Safer Seller scheme took place in 2019/2020. Operation Neptune was in place to target stolen goods. The Safer Seller Scheme is a UK Police initiative led by the Metropolitan Police Service which seeks to reduce crime and increased recovery of stolen property by working with businesses to sign up to the scheme.
- 8.5 In 2019 and early part of 2020, Operation Neptune continued with second hand sellers visited once a month by Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs). 67 visits took place from January – March 2020. In that duration, three stolen phones were found in 3 separate premises. Due to good practice undertaken by stores, ID and CCTV footage was provided and passed onto the Police priority crime unit for action.
- 8.6 Operation Neptune stopped during the lockdown period, however will be resuming in October during the Autumn Nights operational period.

## 9. **Prevent**

- 9.1 The Prevent element of the action plan is around deterring behaviour and crime. This is the element where RBG has the most input as RBG can contribute to works including dissemination of crime prevention and awareness information via different communication routes, including delivering presentations to residents and businesses. An example of this includes a meeting that was held in October 2019 following a spike in commercial burglary in the Charlton and Blackheath areas. RBG colleagues from the Safer Spaces team and Directorate of Regeneration, Enterprise and Skills (DRES) met with the business community and provided the attendees with a presentation which provided the group with an overview of work undertaken to tackle burglary in the area and advice around how to keep their premises secure. The presentation is attached in Appendix B.
- 9.2 In addition to the above, the locations where there were community concerns and a rise in burglary received high visible patrols by the SNT's and signage for Smartwater was placed in Blackheath Standard and surrounding areas as a crime deterrent. Smartwater is a traceable liquid and forensic

asset-marking system that is applied to items of value to identify thieves and deter theft. The liquid leaves a long lasting and unique identifier, whose presence is invisible except under an ultraviolet black light.

- 9.3 The partnership plan refers to the dissemination of crime prevention advice and cocooning visits. Cocooning refers to a tactic whereby the SNT visits premises near to a recently burgled premise to inform the household/business of a recent burglary offence and to provide crime prevention advice.
- 9.4 Cocooning is done to a very high standard in Royal Borough Greenwich. Five properties either side of the burgled address are visited (five to the front and five to the rear if it applies). Crime prevention advice and leaflets provided to the victim and neighbours.
- 9.5 In the last six months, 738 properties were visited and leafleted.
- 9.6 The letter given to the victim of burglary is attached as Appendix C and the crime prevention advice provided is attached as Appendix D.
- 9.7 The RBG Trading Standards Team regularly provides residents and businesses with artifice burglary and doorstep crime prevention and awareness advice. An example of a leaflet disseminated during the Covid-19 lockdown period is attached as Appendix E.
10. Protect
  - 10.1 This component of the plan centres around measures including target hardening to ensure homes and businesses are more secure.
  - 10.2 The protect part of the plan includes the MetTrace Initiative. MetTrace is the Police initiative to reduce burglary across London through forensic property marking, namely Smartwater. MetTrace was being reviewed in April 2020 as MPS were looking to possibly change the scheme. The review remains underway.
  - 10.3 In the Royal Borough of Greenwich, 64 Smartwater packs were issued from January 2020 – March 2020. A further 33 packs were issued to the businesses in Charlton as part of focussed work to tackle burglary in the area.
  - 10.4 The Royal Borough of Greenwich is one of the only boroughs in the MPS to hit an 85 % saturation rate in priority wards, which have been identified as Blackheath Westcombe and Kidbrooke with Hornfair Wards.

- 10.5 One aim in the plan under this component refers to the identification of targeted action for repeat victims, offenders and locations by Neighbourhood Officers. One such example in 2019 was the commercial area in Charlton. Several actions were undertaken by Police and RBG including:
- Smartwater
  - Target hardening measures including revising shutter anchor points
  - Street briefings and patrols
  - Arresting a prolific offender who was charged with multiple offences.

10.5.1 As a result of these measures, burglary reduced in the vicinity.

## 11. **Prepare**

- 11.1 This part of the plan includes minimising the impact of burglary on the community.
- 11.2 The Safer Communities Senior Community Safety Specialist and Detective Inspector from the BCU who leads on burglary will be liaising regarding actions in this section of the plan.
- 11.3 One aim and objective in this part of the plan highlights reducing the impact of crime and working with partners, strengthening community relations. This includes police and RGB communicating with groups such as ward panels, the Safer Neighbourhood Board and Independent Advisory Groups. To date, Burglary has and will continue to feature in these forums. In addition, Police and RBG attend these meetings.

## 12. **BCU activity**

- 12.1 For information, the BCU burglary team regularly liaises with the SNTs to inform the SNTs of any ongoing initiatives and investigations. The team is always progressing ongoing burglary investigations. This includes new reports and investigations into linked series of offences.
- 12.2 Currently, the team has an ongoing linked series of burglaries where the offenders are stealing high value vehicles. The team is doing some joint work around the offenders and there will be RBG links where applicable and possible.

### 13. **Governance and Resource**

- 13.1 Progress of the plan is monitored and discussed at intervals at both the full SGP and the SGP Executive meetings.
- 13.2 Extra funding and resources were successfully applied for by Police to tackle burglary, in particular residential burglary within RBG.
- 13.3 The Council has no specific funding source for work on burglary, however several RBG services contribute, including the Safer Communities Team, Trading Standards team, Tenancy Services and the Safer Spaces team. The strategic and coordinating lead for the Council is a Senior Community Safety Specialist in the Safer Communities Team. The post was vacant for several months as a result of restructuring however the new postholder, started at the beginning of April 2020 and is able to commit approximately 20% of capacity to this area of their responsibilities.

### 14. **Covid-19 Commercial Burglary Plan**

- 14.1 During the Covid-19 Lockdown period, there were several 4 P plans developed to monitor and focus on particular areas as it was predicted there may be increase in certain crime types. This included Commercial Burglary, Domestic Abuse, Fraud and Hate Crime.
- 14.2 During this period, it was ensured that RBG sent out crime prevention and awareness messages to protect businesses from being targeted by utilising social media platforms. One message included: 'Protect your business from the outside in! Non-essential businesses that are COVID-19 secure are allowed to reopen from 15 June. Here's some [@metpoliceuk](#) tips on how businesses can protect their premises from robbery: [www.met.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/business-robbery/protect-your-business/](http://www.met.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/business-robbery/protect-your-business/)'.
- 14.3 The Commercial Burglary 4 P plan is attached for reference and information as Appendix F along with crime awareness and prevention advice provided by Police as Appendix G.

### 8. **Consultation Results**

- 8.1 Not applicable. This report is for information for scrutiny purposes.

### 10. **Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Legal</b> including Human Rights Act	Not applicable – this is an information report.	N/A
<b>Finance</b> and other resources including procurement implications	Not applicable – this is an information report.	N/A
<b>Community safety</b>	This is an information report, where Burglary is a MOPAC priority.	Aysev Ismail 01/09/2020

## 11. **Report Appendices**

11.1 The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Partnership Burglary Plan Appendix A
- Commercial Burglary presentation for Charlton & Blackheath Appendix B
- Victim of burglary letter Appendix C
- Crime Prevention Leaflet Appendix D
- Trading Standards Leaflet Appendix E
- Commercial Burglary Plan Appendix F
- Covid related advice for businesses Appendix G

## 12. **Background Papers**

None.

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