

Burglary

joint inspection

Safer Leeds Partnership

March 2011



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Executive summary

1 Burglary continues to be a significant issue for Leeds. The rate of burglary is one of the highest in the country. Burglary has not followed the other major crime types in Leeds, which have seen year-on-year falls. The Safer Leeds Partnership (the Partnership) has made burglary one of its top priorities since April 2009. It has reversed some of the rises in burglary in 2009 but has still got a long way to go to close the gap with other comparable cities and towns. In the 2009 residents' survey, Leeds residents put 'feeling safe in your own home' as their top priority.

2 Leeds faces some challenging circumstances which underpin some of the causes of burglary. Poorer quality housing and mobile populations can provide easier targets for burglars. Leeds has above average levels of poor private rented housing stock, which make homes more vulnerable to burglars. There are some large estates where vulnerable young people are more prone to being socialised into burglary by peers, and a network and culture that allows for the easy disposal of stolen goods.

3 The reductions in burglary during 2010 reflect the commitment and effort of partners across Leeds. Sustaining and building on this success is hampered by the lack of an up to date strategic approach. Current planning is largely tactical in nature. There is not a clear long-term vision of what the Partnership wants to achieve and therefore what success for burglary reduction would look like for Leeds. Target setting has reflected this, with annual targets which have not always been consistent between the Partnership and Police and have lacked a longer term goal.

4 Partners are committed to working at a Leeds and neighbourhood level. The joint provision of the Safer Leeds Unit is clear evidence of this productive approach. The Partnership has streamlined its decision making. The Safer Leeds Executive manages business, with the full Community Safety Partnership meeting less often as a consultative board.

5 Information sharing and development of quality intelligence is a critical part of the fight against burglary. The Partnership has improved the quality and effectiveness of its intelligence arrangements. However the skills of its intelligence staff could be further utilised to develop its picture on burglary. The intelligence gathered could also be more clearly used to support priority setting in the annual Joint Strategic Assessment.

6 Partnership collaboration on offender management is good and clearly focused on reducing burglary in Leeds. All offenders are managed as part of the prolific and persistent offenders (PPO) cohort or through the integrated offender management (IOM) programme. These programmes were refreshed in 2009 to concentrate on those known to have committed burglary. Offenders managed by the Partnership commit less crime. Management of offenders is becoming increasingly sophisticated with good cooperation between partners. Divisional based multi-agency case conferencing is enhanced by involving Education Leeds, Social Care and Signpost (a family intervention scheme). Understanding of the burglary problem in Leeds has improved. However Leeds has a large burglar population and it is questionable whether the IOM programme is of sufficient scale to match the size of the problem.

7 Leeds has higher concentrations of houses in multiple occupation (HMO) and poorer quality private housing than the national average. The Partnership has improved the quality of housing and lessened the risk of burglary. The use of landlord accreditation and HMO licensing schemes have pushed up standards, but Licensing schemes have not specifically included physical security. The Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) which manage the former Council housing are all actively engaged in partnership work to reduce the risk of burglary to their tenants. Improved information gathering and sharing could better focus this work.

8 Crime prevention covers those activities aimed at proactively reducing the risk of burglary. Leeds' record on this is mixed. Insufficient progress has been made in tackling the market for stolen goods. Burglars wish readily to translate what they steal into cash. The Partnership has not prioritised this aspect of the burglary problem, hampered by a lack of local legislation to better control the second-hand goods market. There has been some success in addressing security risks for those more vulnerable to burglary, such as students. Good partnership working and student-led initiatives have helped achieve this. The Partnership is less clear on how much of a problem burglary is to other vulnerable groups, such as new communities. Target hardening schemes, where funding is put into making homes more difficult to break into have had some successes. Target hardening relies on sufficient mass to make a longer term impact. The loss of government funding for such schemes has curtailed the capacity of the partnership to carry this on. Community Action and Support Against Crime (CASAC) a third sector provider, is working well with the Partnership on promoting improved security and partners are exploring other options to fund ongoing security improvement work.

9 Cuts in public expenditure will impact on the sustainability of the Partnership's drive to tackle burglary. The partners face significant loss of Government funding. The full implications of this were not available at the time of the inspection. However, there is strong political commitment to the 'safer, greener' agenda and the Partnership is confident it can manage the cuts without significantly impacting on burglary reduction. To ensure the most effective use of a smaller pot of resources will need more systematic evaluation, learning and sharing of good practice from others, both within Leeds and nationally. A clearer overall plan and vision of what the Partnership wishes to achieve would also improve value for money through better coordination and effectiveness of the partners activities in the local neighbourhoods.

10 Leeds has had a long-standing burglary problem. The overall rate and volume of burglary has declined from the almost endemic levels in the 1990s, but it has consistently remained well above other similar areas. The Partnership has responded to this problem more effectively and this has delivered improvement during 2010. Ensuring that further progress is sustained will require a continuing and relentless Partnership focus on the causes of burglary, as well as on offenders. This will require the Partnership to provide clearer strategic leadership and planning.

Recommendations

11 The following high-level recommendations are for the Partnership to respond to.

Recommendations

R1 To shift Leeds from its relatively poor performance on burglary requires a bolder and longer term ambition. As part of this it should:

- set out a bold and clear vision of what it is trying to achieve for burglary, considering the broader long-term ambition of the Leeds Initiative;
- create a set of milestones to plot out how it may achieve this over the next three to five years, with regular and formal review points;
- develop a new formal strategy to tackle burglary across Leeds;
- ensure the plans of individual partners and the district partnerships are aligned with the new strategy; and
- formally draw on and share good practice and learning from elsewhere in the country, not just core cities. This should be systematic and ongoing.

R2 The Council should strengthen its regulation of and support for landlords. This will provide the Partnership with more tools and powers to drive up standards of security in the private rented sector.

- The Council should extend its licensing conditions for HMO and its select licensing pilot, to formally include the physical security of residents and tenants as one of the licensing conditions.
- The Council should also consider extending the licensing regime to the other smaller HMO, to provide the partnership with extra leverage in that sector.
- The Partnership should seek to further extend the landlord accreditation schemes, including looking at closer integration between the three current schemes, encourage greater ownership by landlords of improving physical security of their tenants.

Recommendations

- R3** The Partnership should sharpen its focus on disrupting and reducing the stolen goods markets. National research and the findings of this review suggest the ability to rapidly convert stolen goods into ready cash is a key influence on young burglars.
- Greater priority should be assigned to identifying and dealing with outlets which are trading in stolen goods and those individuals that act as receivers and intermediaries in the stolen goods market on a sustained and relentless basis.
 - The Council should seek to tighten controls over the second-hand goods market. It should explore the use of bye-law legislation to provide extra enforcement powers, as well as voluntary codes. Other local authorities have done this to provide an enforcement framework for trading standards and the Police to take action against those who deal in stolen goods.
- R4** The Partnership should review the effectiveness, scope, prioritisation, staffing and consistency of approach of its Integrated Offender Management programme. Those in the programme are less likely to reoffend, but the number of suspected burglars is large and the Partnership needs to be sure it is dealing with enough of them to make a significant difference overall on burglary. The Integrated Offender Management programme may need to given higher priority within the Partnership.
- R5** The Partnership should establish a full and clear picture of how burglary is impacting on emerging communities. Leeds is a diverse city and has attracted several new communities. These are often concentrated in those areas prone to poorer housing and burglary. There are several different mechanisms in place to engage with these communities across the Partnership. Drawing on these and its own intelligence, the Partnership should ensure it does not have an under-reported burglary problem in these communities and hence a need to reconsider where it deploys its resources.

Recommendations

- R6** The Police and its partners in the criminal justice system should review the proportion of charges arising from arrests and explore how it can be raised. Leeds has a high fall out rate for those arrested on burglary, when compared with other Forces. Disruption of offenders has its place but converting arrests into charges, raises the cost to burglars. Specific action should include:
- a greater emphasis on the quality of case evidence;
 - regular reviews of cases which do and don't proceed so lessons are learned and applied more widely;
 - ongoing dialogue between Police and the Crown Prosecution Service on adopting a more robust approach to charging persistent burglars and dealers in stolen goods; and
 - formally engaging the Local Criminal Justice Board in the work of the Partnership.
- R7** The Partnership should assess more systematically the value for money provided by its different approaches to tackling burglary. It should ensure that the impact, cost and effectiveness of all activities are evaluated robustly and lessons shared across the Partnership. As public finance becomes tighter, the Partnership needs to be clearer on 'what works', the scale needed to make an impact and where resources need to be targeted.

Context

What is burglary?

12 Burglary is defined in the Theft Act 1968 as:

"A person is guilty of burglary if he enters any building or part of a building as a trespasser and with intent to commit any such offence as is mentioned ... below; or having entered any building or part of a building as a trespasser he steals or attempts to steal anything in the building or that part of it or inflicts or attempts to inflict on any person therein any grievous bodily harm."

13 Domestic burglary can be defined as those acts or attempted acts of burglary against a building which is a residence, as opposed to a commercial premise or an outhouse or shed. In Leeds the problem is with domestic burglary and all references in this report are to domestic burglary. All figures quoted are those officially recorded by the Police as a domestic burglary or attempted burglary. As with every crime type, an unknown level of burglary goes unreported, although national research suggests the rate of reporting is much higher for burglary. This is linked to the demands of insurance. Under-reporting is therefore more likely in poorer, more transient areas.

14 The burglary rate is influenced by the combination of potential offender and victim populations; physical access, by the local geography and quality of dwellings and the cost against benefits, of burglary to offenders.

The Locality

15 Over 750,000 people live in Leeds – making it the largest city in Yorkshire and Humberside. The economy has grown quickly over the past ten years. The city has changed from being a mainly industrial city into an important business, finance and legal centre. It is at the centre of the 'Leeds City Region'.

16 The population has been increasing quickly. It is forecast to continue to grow, particularly the number of people aged over 65. Leeds is diverse, with over 130 nationalities, including a black and minority ethnic population of just under 11 per cent. It is an area of great contrasts. It includes rural areas like Harewood and Wetherby, where most people are well-off. It also includes densely populated, inner-city areas where people are poorer and housing quality is a big problem.

17 Leeds was the 85th most deprived area in England in 2007, an improvement on 2004 when it was 63rd. But parts of Leeds are still deprived. Over 150,000 people live in areas which are among the 10 per cent most deprived in the country.

18 There are particular problems with young offenders. Leeds has a higher proportion of younger offenders than average. Most detected burglaries in Leeds are carried out by males under the age of 21. The Safer Leeds Partnership's figures shows that just under a half of all offenders are aged between 15 and 19. The high number of young people not in education, employment or training and high rates of persistent absence in secondary schools, highlight problems around engaging young people in positive activities.

19 The three universities have attracted a large student population of some 60,000. This is concentrated in the North-West of Leeds. Students tend to live in poorer quality, rented housing, possess attractive and portable items and so can act as a magnet for burglars. The Leeds Universities and Colleges Crime Reduction Partnership brings together the university sector, Safer Leeds, Police, Council and other key partners.

The Partnership

20 The Council, NHS, Police, Fire and Probation and other public services, voluntary organisations and businesses, work together as 'The Leeds Initiative' to improve the quality of life for people in Leeds. Partners share a vision 'to bring the benefits of a prosperous, vibrant and attractive city to all the people of Leeds'. They have ambitions of 'Going up a league' economically and in quality of life and 'Narrowing the gap' between the richer and poorer parts of Leeds. The Leeds Initiative is the overarching partnership, setting the overall priorities for the city.

21 Within the Leeds Initiative sits the Safer Leeds Partnership (the Partnership) which leads on improving community safety, including burglary. It is the statutory Community Safety Partnership, formerly the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. The partnership has an Executive, which meets monthly and the full Community Safety Partnership, which meets quarterly.

22 Within the Partnership is the Safer Leeds unit, an integrated Police and Council community safety service; the Council and its portfolio holder; three police divisions or Basic Command Units (City and Holbeck, North West and North East Leeds); the West Yorkshire Police Authority; the Leeds Young Offender Team; Leeds Probation service; West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, the Director of Public Health; the social housing providers (ALMOs) and voluntary sector organisations such as CASAC.

23 The overarching objective of Safer Leeds is to 'Increase Public Confidence and Satisfaction'. The priority areas for Safer Leeds were refreshed in November 2010:

- Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour;
- Tackling Crime;
- Preventing and Reducing Offending; and
- Improving Safeguarding and Reducing Vulnerability.

Community Safety

24 Leeds has, in general, become a safer place to live. Total recorded crime fell in each of the three years from 2007/08 to 2009/10. During 2009/10 overall crime reduced by 8 per cent. Leeds is 9th in its family group of 15 similar areas (as determined by the Home Office). Its rate of crime per 1,000 residents (93.7 for the last year) is just above the average for this group. For most crimes, Leeds is seeing improvement. It is domestic burglary that stands out as different.

25 Overall burglary across Leeds reduced from over 16,300 offences in 2002/03 to 9,521 in 2009/10. But it has increased for each of the last three years, when the national trend has been downwards. During 2009/10 burglaries increased by 3 per cent on the previous year.

26 Over the last two years several external evaluations have highlighted the issue of continued high rates of burglary in Leeds. Under the former Comprehensive Area Assessment, Leeds received a 'red flag' on dealing with burglary. In November 2009 the National Police Improvement Agency visited Leeds to explore progress on burglary, reporting in January 2010. Burglary is a challenge for West Yorkshire Police (the Force). While the performance of the Force is heavily influenced by that in Leeds, other areas in West Yorkshire are also suffering high levels of burglary. The Force set up its own initiative – Operation Titan in 2010, to improve its corporate approach to dealing with burglary.

Detailed findings

Performance

27 Burglary rates in Leeds are among the highest in the country. For 2009/10 Leeds was the third worst in the country for its rate of burglary per household. In some parts of Leeds, burglary is three times the national average. Burglary is high in deprived areas like Beeston, Harehills, and Armley. Areas with high student populations also suffer, such as Headingley, where burglary was nearly nine times higher than Wetherby in 2008/09. Leeds residents are therefore at much higher risk of being burgled than those in other similar areas. The risks are worse for those living in more deprived areas.

28 In the last three years the gap between Leeds and the rest of the country for burglary widened. Over the period April 2007 to March 2010 the rate of burglary per household in Leeds went up 13 per cent, whereas nationally it went down 4 per cent and for the most similar areas, down 7 per cent. So the relative position of Leeds got significantly worse. The burglary rate compared with others has improved in recent months, although it is still subject to fluctuations. During 2010/11 there has been a positive shift and a recovery of some of the ground lost in Leeds. For the eight months in this year we have figures for, Leeds has performed well above the national and similar area comparators, reducing the rate of burglary by 11.4 per cent, compared with 4.5 and 7.7 respectively. Signs of improvement are therefore evident but it is still early to say how sustained this will be.

29 In the last full year (1 November 2009 – 31 October 2010) burglary fell by 11 per cent, representing over a thousand fewer offences than in the same period the year before. The trend while positive is still fluid, as in the latter half of 2010 the rate has begun to rise again. The improvement so far has not significantly closed the gap between Leeds and other similar areas. Reducing burglary to a level more in line with other cities and towns remains a major challenge for the Leeds Partnership.

30 People feeling safe in their homes was rated the highest priority for residents of Leeds. The Leeds Residents Survey was commissioned by Leeds City Council in summer 2009. The Residents Survey covers the whole city and takes place every two years. The highest ranked priority, by a long way, was 'feeling safe in your own home', at 31 per cent. It was also rated the most important cause in making your neighbourhood a good place to live. There was no specific question on burglary or crime in the survey. Concerns about safety and dissatisfaction with the local neighbourhood, was more significant in the more deprived areas of Leeds. Personal security is a key issue for residents of Leeds.

Leadership and partnership working

Ambition

31 The Partnership has not got a clear and ambitious vision for what it is trying to achieve on tackling burglary. There was common agreement on the need to reduce the overall level of burglary and address the continuing rise in burglary in 2009. However the ambition to continue to drive burglary down, in line with what has been achieved elsewhere, has been more limited. Without clear and challenging targets it is more difficult to drive performance across a complex partnership.

32 The Partnership has some ideas on what success would look like but these have not been fully formed. The Partnership has not articulated its vision of what it is trying to achieve on burglary, other than a single target on reduction. There are therefore no clear success criteria to judge whether the Partnership is being effective.

33 Target setting is not fully joined up throughout the Partnership. Target setting has been an evolving and negotiated process. In 2008/09 the Partnership and the Force set two differing targets for burglary. It was possible for the Force to meet its targets while the Partnership did not. A new target for 2011 is to be discussed with the Force, which the Partnership expect will be a challenging one.

34 The chair of the Leeds Initiative has outlined a long-term ambition for Leeds to be the best English 'core city' by 2030. This includes being the safest core city. As burglary forms a significant element of acquisitive crime, it would need to be significantly reduced to achieve this aim. While this provides a long-term vision, there is a need for a clearer statement of the milestones along the way to delivering this and at what cost.

Strategic approach

35 The Partnership has no formal strategic plan to tackle burglary. Safer Leeds can outline an approach, relying on improving partnership working, focusing on target localities and vulnerable groups. However there is no current strategic plan capturing this or ensuring that progress is in line with what partners wish to achieve. The Partnership drew up a plan in 2009 which is no longer used. Without an updated and dynamic strategy and action plans to deliver them, it will be more difficult to ensure a coordinated and effective response to the problem.

36 At a local and partner level there are several action plans but without an overarching plan, there is a significant risk of poor coordination. The monthly tasking exercise aims to provide a coordination and leadership role. The focus of these meetings is tactical, rather than ensuring progress against a longer term approach. Some burglary problems are city wide, such as professional travelling burglars and stolen goods. This problem needs a more corporate and strategic approach.

Strong Partnership working

37 Partnership working is well embedded. There is a strong ethos of working in partnership to address prevention and reduction of burglary, resulting in a range of interagency activity. Steps were taken to streamline the then CDRP, allowing the Safer Leeds Executive a more strategic role. The practise of all three BCU commanders now attending the Executive has also improved communication between the Partnership and Police.

38 The Police and Council have formed a strong partnership. The integrated Safer Leeds team has helped build up trust and forms the core of the wider partnership. The Youth Offending Team, Probation and third sector are also well engaged. Overall it is a self-confident group and co-operative. Good partnership working is essential in tackling a multifaceted problem like burglary.

39 The Safer Leeds Unit is a clear strength to the wider partnership. Safer Leeds is an integrated Council and Police team, headed by a senior Police officer. It also has seconded staff from the YOT and Probation plus access to a wider virtual team. The success of this unit has helped to build up good working relationships. This is used to improve the quality of intelligence and targeting of work on burglary for example mapping family networks drawing on adult care.

40 The District Community Safety Partnerships, which mirror the Police divisions, provide a strong local focus for tackling burglary. The inspection team was impressed with the evident enthusiasm and commitment of the various partners met during the visits to the district partnerships. As the nature of the burglary problem varies from area to area, good partnership working locally is essential to coordinate and focus activity effectively.

41 The organisational boundaries of the partners present added challenges to the Partnership. There are three Police divisions, with 17 neighbourhood policing teams (NPT) which mirror local authority services. Children's services are reorganising and likely to be more around school clusters in future. The Partnership recognises the potential issues caused by differences among agency boundaries. Non co-terminus boundaries can lead to lack of connectivity between partners. NPTs, Area Management, Well-Being Teams, Area Committees and so on, all have differing geographical boundaries. Services are encouraged to deliver at a 'neighbourhood' level and there needs to be clear partnership agreement on how 'neighbourhoods' in Leeds are defined. It is important that partners keep the configuration of services under review to ensure that they are working as effectively as possible, particularly in view of current financial constraints.

42 Children's services and trading standards are less well engaged in partnership working. Children's services have had significant issues to deal with in safeguarding and reorganisation. The YOT, which comes under children services, is a key and active partner. There are gaps in information sharing about some aspects of social care. There are potentially significant overlaps between problem families, the high truancy rate and the high number of burglars who are children. Closer working between agencies is needed to ensure the most effective outcomes. Trading standards are not involved in joint burglary reduction activity in Leeds. Trading Standards are not part of the Safer Leeds Partnership nor have any formal link into it. Trading Standards focus on counterfeit goods and doorstep crime such as bogus officials. They cooperated on the closure of the Cross Green markets because of its role in counterfeit goods. There is scope for closer working, given the overlap between stolen goods, distraction burglars and cold call zones.

Intelligence and Information sharing

43 The Safer Leeds Intelligence Unit is a partnership arrangement which has improved the quality of information to support tasking and intelligence on burglary. The Council and Police developed an intelligence product to drive tasking and delivery. Subsequently, the team has expanded to include staff from Probation, Youth Offending Services, and Education and put in place information sharing agreements to ensure contributing data from Social Care, Fire Service, Housing, Health and voluntary sector partners. The Partnership has achieved significant improvements in what they know about the burglary problem. For example producing detailed profiles on problem families and networks of known prolific offenders.

44 The intelligence teams could be tasked and used more effectively, given their skill sets. The analysts can deliver effective intelligence analysis. They have been selected and trained to deliver in this role. Training has covered data systems, crime patterns and the 'Jill Dando Institute' method. Partners were not making the most of the expertise within the teams. The intelligence teams could provide more effective support, if they were given more ownership and opportunity to engage in problem solving. For example in highlighting patterns and trends and identifying potential ways of tackling problems. Field visits to burglary hot spot locations would increase their understanding and improve the value of packages produced.

45 There remain some gaps in intelligence sharing. For example Trading Standards and the Partnership do not share intelligence. Trading Standards hold relevant information, but it is not being consistently shared. There are no formal intelligence sharing arrangements, meaning any work which Trading Standards do that could impact on burglary is lost to other agencies. This makes for a less than effective response to crime prevention. Informal and improvised intelligence sharing does happen, for example when NPTs visit second-hand shops and trading stands, they will share intelligence. Both Trading Standards and the Partnership were responsive to suggestions of more formal intelligence sharing.

46 The formal annual assessment of priorities, intelligence and gaps – the Joint Strategic Assessment (JSA) – lacks direct evidence on burglary. There was no quantification of victims, offenders or geographical information presented as part of the 2010 JSA. The detail is held in the intelligence unit and members of the Safer Leeds Executive felt they had sufficient awareness of the issues. However there have been changes in key personnel on the Executive and information should be available at the point of decision making. There is a balance to be struck between detail and strategic narrative, but without a clear evidence base, it is more difficult to take robust and informed decisions, particularly in times of financial retrenchment. The Force has recently approved a change in its structure and approach to intelligence under a new Director of Intelligence. There are opportunities to link in to the Partnership intelligence structures either through formal protocol or agreement.

Offender Management

47 The Partnership has a good track record in reducing offending by those managed as part of the PPO or wider IOM programme. Performance monitoring of the YOS and Probation both show that reoffending has significantly reduced in the last year. The IOM approach is established and increasingly sophisticated and there are several developments that should improve performance further. The IOM programme is overseen by a central partnership based IOM unit at Mabgate and supported by three police only divisional IOM teams.

48 Strong partnership arrangements are in place for dealing with offenders. Probation and the Youth Offending Team are collaborating to address the transition between the two services. This was previously highlighted in 2009 as a potential gap. Probation officers were seconded into the Youth Offending Team to improve interworking. There are plans to put more resources into this team to focus on offenders that are in transition into adulthood.

49 The IOM team is improving and tailoring individual case management. It employs an offender need analysis, using probation's 'OASys' information system. This has been improved through detailed discussion around how best to deal with each individual offender. There is a need to consider how the arrangements for.

50 The 'sixth hub' at Leeds prison could significantly improve the treatment service provided to prisoners serving a sentence of less than 12 months. The Partnership plans to expand its target group beyond statutory clients and address the issues of those serving sentences of less than 12 months. This includes the case management of all non-statutory PPOs. These offenders have the highest rate of reoffending, 59 per cent compared with 37 per cent for those subject to statutory supervision. And this group contains a significant number of burglary offenders. While this development looks promising, it is still early days to assess its impact on burglary.

51 Despite the effectiveness of the approach and the planned improvements prospects for improvement against comparable cities are unclear. We have had some assurance that the management of known burglars is flexible and covers a larger cohort than that officially designated under the IOM or PPO approach. However Leeds has a high number of burglars, in and outside these programmes. It is possible the programmes are not therefore picking up as large a proportion of the offending population as other cities may be. The challenge for the Partnership is whether the resources assigned are sufficient to cover a large enough percentage of the offending population, to make a significant difference to the burglary rate.

52 We have heard how young people are 'socialised into burglary' and therefore engage in burglary from an early age. This and the social conditions that allow for the easy disposal of stolen goods and widespread knowledge of methods of entry are all reasons that make the burglar population in Leeds much larger and more fluid than many other cities. The Partnership should therefore ensure that it understands how resources applied to the burglary problem compare with other areas as part of its strategic analysis and planning.

53 The IOM unit is limited in its capacity to produce and use intelligence on offenders. There is no intelligence analysis function based with the individual IOM teams. This means that intelligence produced by the Partnership is not directly driving the IOM units. The Partnership is looking to address this within existing resources. There are also opportunities to make better use of youth offending service data and to provide more information to the YOT. The YOT does not receive enough intelligence on young offenders' families that could improve the range of tactics and diversionary activities, and access or better direct existing resources that work with families and siblings of these offenders.

54 Leeds charges fewer of those arrested on burglary than comparable areas. Over 54 per cent of offenders arrested are not charged. This is significantly higher than in other comparable Police Forces. Partners have credited this to offender disruption tactics, although this approach is also used in other areas with a lower attrition rate. Arresting but not proceeding to charge carries a cost to the Force. Since the financial settlement, the Partnership needs to be sure this represents good value for money.

55 The overall quality of case files in Leeds is inadequate. As a result, Leeds has the highest percentage (28.2 per cent) of cases in West Yorkshire where the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) refuses to accept the charge. Performance has deteriorated by 3.6 per cent when compared with 2009/10. The CPS attributes this to being supplied with poor or late evidence for prosecution. Officers feel CPS is too cautious and not robust enough in taking charges forward. In combination, this means that a high proportion of burglars arrested are not being charged with the offence. This is having a negative impact on the 'catch and convict' burglary reduction strategy.

56 Anecdotal evidence suggests that the courts are not using consistently the 'three strikes and out' rule for repeat burglary offenders. The lack of CPS representation at the Leeds Strategic IOM Board and of engagement between the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) and the Partnership could also be hampering partners from maximising the impact of 'catch and convict' offender management.

57 Mainstream diversionary activity for young people is not well targeted on burglary reduction. A wide range of diversionary activity is being delivered across the Partnership. Much of this is targeted at young offenders and those at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour. There is undoubtedly a need for much of this activity but a focus on building mainstream positive activity in the form of sports and arts isn't a key element of the Partnership's strategy. The Partnership is not working effectively with other groups of the Leeds Initiative on youth diversion. For example, sports and other positive activity, which can be delivered by the third sector, directed towards areas where anti-social behaviour is a problem. Much burglary in Leeds is closely associated with boredom and teen culture and therefore ASB reduction tactics are clearly of benefit in reducing burglary. But there remains a need to ensure that elements of diversionary activity are focussed more specifically on reducing burglary.

Strategic Housing

58 The Partnership has improved the quality of housing, which has reduced the risk of burglary. The condition and type of housing influences burglary rates. Poorer quality stock and houses in multiple occupation serve transient populations and are more vulnerable to break-ins. Leeds has higher concentrations of houses in multiple occupation (HMO) and poorer quality private housing than the national average.

Private rented housing

59 Leeds has above average concentrations of poorer quality private housing. The last private sector stock condition survey in 2007, identified that Leeds had a higher than national number of non-decent private homes. In Leeds 33 per cent of private sector housing did not meet the housing decency standard, compared with the national average of 27 per cent. This represents 81,000 properties, 44 per cent of these being in the private rented sector. The biggest reason for failure of the decent homes standard is inadequate heating. The third highest cause, which has more of a bearing on burglary, is being in need of repair, some 27,100 homes. A significant proportion of non-decent homes in Leeds are occupied by vulnerable residents. 32,100 homes or 37 per cent of non-decent houses contain a vulnerable household.

60 Leeds has a higher than average number of houses in multiple occupation (HMO). An estimated 3.5 per cent of dwellings in Leeds are HMO, which means just over 8,600 buildings are used to house multiple households. The national average for HMO is roughly 2 per cent. HMO tend

to be more vulnerable to burglary, so the higher numbers of HMO presents a further challenge to the partnership.

61 Leeds is making progress in licensing the larger HMO. The Council has powers to license HMO and set standards for landlords. The Council has issued 2,766 licences. Those HMO which are licensed are subject to inspection to ensure they meet the required standards. For example it is a compulsory condition of the licence for the landlord to attend a professional landlord development course.

62 The Council has a robust approach to enforcement of standards in the HMO sector. It has revoked 335 landlord licences and had 40 successful prosecutions resulting in £116,000 of fines. In addition the Council has issued 110 formal notices to landlords about improving housing standards. This is helping to ensure that homes in the private rented sector are managed more effectively and are providing higher standards of accommodation.

63 The Council has secured a selective licensing scheme for one neighbourhood, which had to be approved by national government. The scheme started in October 2009 and is ensuring a focus on improving housing conditions within the private rented sector. There have been 477 requests for licences and by November 2010 there were 259 final licences issued to landlords who have satisfied license requirements. But no inspection of compliance with the licensing standards has yet taken place. There have been positive signs of improvement, crime rates have fallen although not dramatically (136 down to 120 per quarter).

64 Physical security is not part of the licence for landlords in the selective licensing area or for the HMO licensing. Physical security issues may well be identified and advice or improvement notices given to landlords. However given the high rates of burglary in Leeds, not explicitly covering security in the license means both a power to enforce improvement and a means to ensure a clear message was sent to landlords is being missed. Nor does the licensing scheme cover the 5,000 plus smaller HMO. Extending the licensing regime to these would provide additional powers to drive up standards in the private rented sector.

65 There are three separate landlord accreditation schemes in use in Leeds. Although the three agencies managing the schemes, Unipol, the University and the Council do work well together there are differences in the accreditation schemes. The Council passport landlords on to their scheme who have been members of the Unipol scheme. Generally there is not much crossover in the markets so duplication is not necessarily occurring. There would be benefits for all landlords complying with a single standard, in order to be accredited in Leeds regardless of the market.

66 The Council has a comprehensive landlord accreditation scheme. It has 450 accredited landlords which represents roughly 14 per cent of the private rented sector. There is a well-attended and regular forum held with landlords which provides guidance on home security as well as updates for landlords on changes to legislation. The expectations placed on landlords to

enable them to comply with the scheme are robust. There is vetting to ensure the landlord is responsible and competent and the property is in a good state of repair. The latter includes health and safety and physical security. Compliance is assessed through random compliance checks. Access to training is provided for landlords who are part of the scheme. Landlord accreditation is a voluntary scheme but does help to raise standards in the private rented sector.

67 Unipol runs a well-established landlord accreditation scheme, for the universities in Leeds and is a separate registered charity. Students are encouraged to make use of accredited landlords.

68 The Council is considering outsourcing the administration of its scheme, to ensure it continues given potential funding cuts and the Council capacity to continue to support the scheme. This could provide an opportunity for a more co-ordinated approach to landlord accreditation across the city. Equally it could result in discontinuing the scheme and or a less co-ordinated approach to accreditation across the city. The future of the scheme and the benefits it has delivered are uncertain.

69 Purpose-built student accommodation has increased in recent years, reducing the reliance on private rented property. Students can draw on support from Unipol, the University and the Student Unions for housing advice. The Architectural Liaison Officers within the 'Secured by Design' initiative have a key role to play in engaging at the planning stage of new developments and monitoring standards.

70 A longer term risk exists for private landlords who don't or won't conform to higher standards for housing. These may shift from the student market to housing marginalised groups, such as new migrant communities, who have less support to call on. This potentially perpetuates the problem of poor quality housing, providing a target for burglars.

Public Sector Housing

71 The former Council housing is now managed by three arm's length management organisations or ALMOs and for the Belle Isle estate; there is a tenant's management organisation (BITMO). Public sector housing makes up 18 per cent of Leeds housing stock. The ALMO are on target to meet housing decency standards, which will reduce their vulnerability to burglary.

72 The three ALMOs and BITMO engage in partnership working to reduce burglary across the city. One of the ALMOs has a burglary reduction action plan and the others are developing them. They all attend the regular multi-agency tasking group on burglary. There is a regular item on the agenda on the actions that ALMOs are taking in their areas. They also work closely with local neighbourhood policing teams, sharing intelligence and participating in local initiatives to tackle particular issues in their area. ALMOs have made significant contributions to improving local neighbourhoods through funding from area panels for burglar alarms, improved lighting and environmental works on the estates. They have worked closely with crime prevention staff to identify a suitable higher

specification lock which is now being used when replacements are required. The support of the ALMO is contributing to a reduction of burglary in those areas.

73 The three ALMOs are not making the most of their own information and intelligence to contribute to reducing the risk of burglary in their areas. For example they do not always know if a tenant has been a victim of burglary. It is not clear if they record this as an issue when tenants report repairs. This is an issue to resolve, as households subject to burglary are at increased risk of being burgled again (repeat victimisation). No systematic analysis of repair requests and burglary reports has been undertaken. Such an approach could improve ALMO understanding of burglary and enable them to further amend their approach or use of materials accordingly.

Supporting vulnerable people

74 Most housing related support services work across all tenures to ensure vulnerable people are supported to maintain their homes. The Supporting People programme funds several floating support services that provide tailored support packages to vulnerable people such as those with an offending history, mental health difficulties or drug and alcohol problems. These services help vulnerable people to access and maintain housing both in private and social housing.

75 There are support services available in Leeds to enable ex-offenders and those at risk of offending to access suitable accommodation. There are five separate providers delivering twelve different services, some are with high-risk offenders and some with priority and prolific offenders. The services are all of a good quality and are meeting required standards, their aim being to access suitable accommodation and ensure people with an offending history access and retain accommodation that is suitable for their needs. Good use is made of the private rented sector and accommodation provided by accredited landlords. This is helping sensitively rehouse ex-offenders and reduce the likelihood of their reoffending in the future.

76 Information sharing protocols are not in place between Probation and ALMOs to ensure that offenders are being properly rehoused with the necessary support. There are examples where services have managed rehousing options to ensure ex-offender's have been rehoused away from victims. However the ALMOs do not receive adequate information on previous offences of housing applicants, with an offending history. This prevents housing providers from being able to sensitively rehouse offenders away from previous offending areas and ensuring appropriate support and signposting can be provided to assist with resettlement.

Crime prevention

77 Crime prevention covers those activities aimed at proactively reducing the risk of burglary. This can be improving the security of homes and raising awareness of how people can make themselves safer in their homes. Or work to reduce incentives to burgle, such as making it more difficult to dispose of stolen goods.

Stolen goods market

78 The stolen goods market is not being systematically challenged and targeted. Burglars need to be able to convert the goods they steal into cash. Research by the Partnership and findings during this inspection suggest that much localised burglary is motivated by short-term pursuit of ready cash. Home Office research (1998) found that for those starting out in burglary, the success or failure to convert stolen property into cash plays an important part in whether they continue to offend. Within the district partnerships and Police divisions there is general awareness of how burglars are converting stolen goods into cash. This is a city wide issue and potentially a growing problem as more second-hand and pawnbroker style shops set up in Leeds.

79 The Partnership has carried out various activities for dealing with the stolen good market. The Cross Green market was closed, partly because of its role in handling stolen goods. Operation Affix ran in late 2010, to tackle stolen goods markets, particularly in jewellery. Actions have been taken against individual traders and intelligence gathered within police divisions. This is not however being translated into a systematic approach to reducing the market for stolen goods. This gap was also identified by the NPIA external report in early 2010.

80 Local legislation has not been developed to assist in applying sanctions to second-hand goods outlets. For example, Croydon, Kent, Nottingham and Greater Manchester have passed bye-laws to license and set conditions on second-hand goods markets. These typically require recording of the details of who is attempting to pass on second-hand goods, set age controls and require higher proof of ownership. This route of legislation and bye laws is not straightforward and the practicalities would need to be further explored. Other schemes have added voluntary codes and publicity around not dealing in stolen goods. Licensing schemes then provide a framework for prosecuting those outlets which do not take sufficient action to deal with stolen goods. Providing clearer powers this would also allow for greater cooperation with Trading Standards to police and enforce this market.

Target hardening

81 The Partnership has achieved some success in target hardening, in particular in partnership with the voluntary sector. Community Action and Support Against Crime (CASAC), is a voluntary organisation which provides free security assessments for properties leading to possible recommendations for additional door locks, window locks, spyholes, chains and general crime prevention advice to householders. The Police help target this service to areas where burglary is an issue. CASAC have been successful at gaining funds from the Home Office and charging direct to those who can afford to pay. Members of the public can also directly refer to CASAC and pay for any work required.

82 Efforts have been made to address issues of vulnerability in the housing stock. Some bin yards have been redesigned to ease natural surveillance. Front door gates have been installed on some properties to provide extra security. While providing additional security it does make the area look less attractive.

83 Resources to support crime reduction measures such as target hardening have been significantly reduced, following government withdrawal of grant support. There has been in-year loss of funding, such as the Vigilance Fund and Safer Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF). Support for target hardening schemes has had to be scaled back and alley-gating schemes have now stopped. The Partnership is exploring alternative funding, such as through maintenance programmes within the housing revenue account.

84 Much effort and various funding streams went into target hardening schemes but the overall impact is difficult to assess. 'Penny packet' approaches to target hardening, while benefiting those specific households may not be effective overall, if burglars are simply displaced round the corner. There have been several examples of small-scale schemes, funded without clear targeting, such as grants from Area Committees to be spent equally across the constituent wards. As finances are getting tighter, the Partnership needs to be clearer on what works and the scale needed to make an impact.

Student safety

85 Good partnership arrangements are in place to address the safety of students, including burglary. The Leeds Universities and Colleges Crime Reduction partnership brings together the university sector, Safer Leeds, Police, Council and other partners. The high concentration of students in North-West Leeds, in private rented housing and HMO, has been one of the factors encouraging burglary. In North-West Leeds 23 per cent of burglary victims over the last 18 months were students, although across Leeds this falls to 13 per cent.

86 Specific initiatives have had a positive impact on student burglary. The Knowledge project is well-established as a means to better inform and raise

awareness on student safety. The Knowledge project communicates safety messages to students and provides peer to peer support advice. Research showed students were more likely to trust advice from their peers as opposed to police.

87 Partnership work has focused on reducing student 'insecure burglaries' (where doors or windows have been left open), with some success. Operation Balloon targeted some 500 households in burglary hot spot areas. An area of high burglary rates was targeted each month, with police, student union representatives, students and Unipol staff provided advice to tenants on their doorsteps. For those not at home, if the property was insecure, a blown up balloon was left. If it was secure a deflated one was put through the letter box. A student-led Neighbourhood Watch scheme was the first one developed in the country. This contributed to 20 per cent reductions in the area covered by the scheme. However the funding for the scheme was withdrawn during 2010, so it is not clear whether it will be able to carry on.

Crime Prevention Officers

88 The sustainability of the current police crime prevention operation is in doubt, because of the loss of key personnel and their non-replacement. The role of the crime reduction officer differs in each of the three police divisions, with greater or lesser involvement in the technical support of new technologies such as those used in 'capture houses'. Crime reduction officers attend burglaries of repeat or vulnerable victims and bogus official crimes but not all domestic burglaries. There are well presented burglary information packs available for victims, but their use is not universal across the divisions. Crime reduction officers could have a much greater impact on reducing burglary if their activities were more consistently targeted, for example on seasonal 'spikes'. A Force review has recommended moving to a district based service.

Safer schools partnership

89 The Safer Schools Project is a good example of early intervention. Truancy is a problem for Leeds, and is likely to be linked to burglary and anti-social behaviour. The Safer Schools Project is therefore important. It covers 32 out of 38 high schools, with police officers attached to each. The officers provide information to pupils as potential and actual victims of crime besides creating diversionary work for potential and actual offenders. Each post is match funded by the school so in the current climate finance remains a potential issue for continuing the scheme. It represents a significant investment and effort to deal with the problem at an early age. The Pupil Referral Units, which contain those excluded from mainstream education (30-40 pupils), are outside this programme, although bringing them into the scheme is being piloted in two PRU. To effectively tackle burglary, it is important that schools and schoolchildren are engaged, as many burglars in Leeds are children.

Impact on hard to reach

90 The Partnership has an incomplete view of how burglary is impacting on emerging communities. There are mechanisms in place which should identify at risk communities but there has not been a specific review to see whether there is under-reporting or a hidden problem with burglary among BME groups. There is work with the voluntary sector on supporting vulnerable groups, such as elderly people and introducing four no cold call zones.

Media management

91 The Partnership lacks a burglary media strategy, which means that opportunities are being missed to celebrate successes and raise confidence and satisfaction across the city. The approach to publicity and reporting is fragmented across the police divisions and other partners. There is a balance to be struck between raising awareness and helping communities to build up their own resilience to burglary and raising fear of crime. However a consistent and clear line on publicity forms part of strategies used in other parts of the country to tackle burglary.

Value for money and sustainability

92 The close working of the Partnership has helped drive improvements in value for money. The Safer Leeds Unit is an example of a pooled service. By working together in an integrated unit, police and council staff are creating economies of scale and a more joined approach to delivering community safety.

93 The three police divisions in Leeds carry some duplication and inefficiency. The Force believes it is necessary to have three divisions, given the size of the population served. The Force has reviewed several roles and teams which are delivered within each BCU, considering them for potential movement to a Leeds wide basis. An example would be the converter teams, which deal with clearing up burglary cases and post arrest of offenders. Introducing a single team would improve consistency of approach as well as producing efficiencies. Other areas where there was potential for improving efficiency and sustainability included the crime prevention teams.

94 Operation Titan, a Force wide initiative, provided some short-term added capacity to tackle burglary. Staff from corporate divisions, such as traffic and serious crimes, were engaged in burglary reduction work, which did provide short-term extra resources in the Leeds divisions. Investment in training and up skilling police officers has been well-received. Trident has had a short term impact on levels of burglary. But it has not led to the more wide ranging overhaul of approaches needed to 'break the cycle' of burglary and deliver sustained, long term gains.

95 The Partnership has learnt from others but this has not been done systematically. Drawing on good practice elsewhere should help to drive value for money, by enabling a more effective approach. The Partnership

did look at Sheffield and Newcastle back in 2009 and took on board some ideas on the overall approach from them. However there has been limited use of external learning from others since. The Force commissioned an external review on burglary from the National Police Improvement Agency, which reported in January 2010. However this was not shared more widely in the Partnership and has not been used effectively to drive improvement.

96 Within the Partnership evaluation of the various initiatives undertaken to reduce burglary is partial. Individual initiatives are evaluated, but this is not systematically drawn together to inform the strategic direction of the Partnership. Examples of where evaluation has been less than clear are Operations Bellweather and Champion. For these operations outputs and outcomes are not described in the operational plan. This means the success of the first running of the operations in February 2010 has not been evaluated, and the second running of the operations does not benefit from lessons learnt. As resources become more constrained by budgetary cuts, there is a need for a sharper focus on what works to deliver value for money.

97 A withdrawal of grant funding by central government has cut back or stopped several projects on tackling burglary. The student Neighbourhood Watch scheme, target hardening and alley gating schemes have all seen their grant funding greatly reduced or cut altogether. The Partnership has explored alternative ways of continuing these schemes and making greater use of mainstream funding. Some of this will rely on homeowners and landlords taking on greater responsibility for their own security, with the Partnership providing a more enabling role, for example by working closely with the accredited landlords.

98 There is clear political commitment to supporting the investment in burglary reduction. The new administration's second priority is 'safer and greener'. The relative importance and prioritisation of this was made clear during the inspection. Safer Leeds Partnership funding is likely to be relatively shielded in the budget discussions. However the final budget settlement and scale of the government required cutbacks are still to be determined, so it is too soon to say how it will impact on burglary reduction.

Next steps

99 The Safer Leeds Partnership has commented on the report. The Partnership now intends to take forward the recommendations within this report.

100 The inspection team would like to take the opportunity to thank all those members, staff and officers of the Safer Leeds Partnership for their co-operation, contributions and hospitality.

Appendix 1 Methodology

This report summarises the joint Audit Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary findings from the inspection of Safer Leeds Partnership which took place in November-December 2010. The inspection assessed how well Safer Leeds Partnership has addressed burglary in Leeds, with particular emphasis on Leeds City Council and West Yorkshire Police.

The operational policing aspects of the inspection were carried out by HMIC. The assessment of the broader partnership and its effectiveness in dealing with burglary as a cross cutting issue, were dealt with jointly by the Audit Commission and HMIC.

The joint inspection focused on the following areas.

- Leadership and partnership working between the three Police Basic Command Units and the wider Safer Leeds Partnership.
- The use of intelligence and information sharing, crime recording and investigation in accordance with NCRS, including capacity, capability and the use of forensics.
- Offender management – including the effectiveness of Integrated Offender Management and the Youth Offending Team.
- Strategic housing policy, including provision for those in vulnerable circumstances, for example ex-offenders.
- Crime prevention work with those groups most at risk of burglary, particularly young people.
- Value for money and effectiveness.

The inspection focused on two judgements: Judgement 1 – How well are the services, outcomes and improvements needed to address burglary in Leeds being delivered? This focused on how well public services are responding to burglary, based on police recorded crime statistics and published inspection outcomes; and Judgement 2 – How strong is the capacity to improve? This focuses on the prospects for the future in terms of delivering sustainable reductions in the level of burglary. It is based on the Safer Leeds Partnership's track record in achieving its objectives on burglary to date and the leadership and capacity available to deliver in future.

These judgements were based on findings using the generic key lines of enquiry in the joint approach to inspection. Work by other inspectorates was taken into account, for example HMI Probation inspection of the Leeds YOT. This report is not scored, but identifies recommendations to improve the service provided to the public of Leeds.

The inspection drew on the following.

- Interviews with staff from the Safer Leeds Partnership and other key agencies.
- Observation of Partnership meetings.
- Analysis of key data and documents.

Wherever possible we drew on evidence and materials already available to the joint inspectorates or on public websites, so as to reduce the burden of inspection. We shared in advance the sources of information we held and agreed any new evidence needed.

Appendix 2 CAA and burglary in Leeds

CAA findings – as published in 'Oneplace' December 2009

Burglary rates in Leeds are amongst the highest in the country. In some parts of Leeds, they are three times the national average. Burglary is particularly high in deprived areas like Beeston, Harehills, and Armley. Areas with high student populations also suffer, such as Headingley, where burglary was nearly nine times higher than in Wetherby in 2008/09.

Overall burglary across Leeds reduced from over 16,300 offences in 2002/03 to 9,248 in 2008/09. But it has increased for each of the last three years, at a time when the national trend has been downwards. Public service partners including the police have been slow to respond to this.

Partners recognise that they must make better use of intelligence to identify high risk offenders. They also know that they must target their efforts effectively at local level rather than take a 'blanket' approach to dealing with the problem. Partners need to work better with the criminal justice system to try and ensure that offenders are given the right sentences and are properly supervised when they leave prison.

There are particular problems with young offenders. Leeds has a higher proportion of younger offenders than average. Most detected burglaries in Leeds are carried out by males under the age of 21. The Safer Leeds Partnership's figures show that just under a half of all offenders are aged between 15 and 19. The high number of young people not in education, employment or training and high rates of persistent absence in secondary schools highlight problems around the engagement of young people in positive activities.

The Partnership has identified the need to do further work to target socially excluded young people, provide the right level of support and improve how the management of young offenders is coordinated. This means sharing information on exclusions and persistent absence from school, identifying families that need the highest levels of support and targeting youth services and supervision. The Safer Schools Partnerships provides a good opportunity to make these links more effectively.

The police and council are working together with the probation service and the courts to try and reduce burglary, but this is not yet having a big impact. Actions include making properties more difficult to break into, improved street lighting, providing activities for youths and targeting prolific offenders. There has been some recent improvement, but this trend must continue over a longer period to deliver the very big improvements which are needed to reduce the wide gap between Leeds and similar areas.

Progress by partners – as published in 'Oneplace' March 2010

Key public service partners are continuing with improvement work in response to this red flag. This includes a joint intelligence function and work in the areas where burglary is highest, including supporting victims, managing offenders and those at risk of offending. New actions include the following.

- Improving the way partners work together to manage offenders, including regular multi-agency case conference reviews and intervention plans.
- Operation Titan – a force-wide initiative that brings in extra resources into hotspot areas, with a particular focus on Hyde Park. This includes prevention (improving security on the most burgled streets, working with the building trade to replace substandard locks); intelligence (increased forensic analysis, focus on second-hand market); integrated offender management: enforcement (additional resources, especially for evenings); investigation (training and support for frontline staff); criminal justice support (improving quality of files); media and marketing.
- Establishing new neighbourhood watch schemes areas where burglary is high, including the first student co-ordinators in the country.
- Burglary profiles for 60,000 houses managed on behalf of the Council, which have started to improve security in the current and emerging hotspots.
- Home Office Secure Homes funding has enabled the purchase of £10,000 worth of Computrace licences which are being offered to students in Leeds with a view to reducing the theft of laptops in burglaries.
- Cross Green Market – identified as a key location for stolen and counterfeit goods – has been closed by Leeds City Council.

Between April and December 2009 there were 7,224 recorded domestic burglaries in Leeds. This was up 7.1 per cent against the previous year (480 more offences); the increase mainly being between April and June. Between October and December there was a reduction of 4.9 per cent (132 fewer offences) compared with the previous year. There has also been a reduction in three out of the six areas with the highest rates of burglary.

In 2008/09 there were 9,248 burglaries. In July the prediction for 2009/10 was 9,900 offences, but this has now reduced to 9,500. Burglary rates are now more stable and the rate of increase is slowing down. This suggests that the work undertaken to date is starting to have an impact, but that there is still some way to go to deliver the big improvements needed.

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