

Repeat Victimisation

STRATEGY: Crime Management
POLICY: Crime Reduction
BRANCH: Crime Management Branch

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Practice Direction sets out procedures for dealing with crimes of repeat victimisation. The decision as to which classes of crime and or victim that will be subject to these requirements will be a local decision; however consideration should be given to including crimes relating to dwelling house burglary, violence against the person and vulnerable victims.
- 1.2 Research indicates that victims of these crimes and incidents may be targeted for subsequent victimisation. Identifying victims and providing appropriate support will form the basis of a targeted crime reduction initiative.
- 1.3 This Practice Direction excludes Hate Incidents, Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences which are subject to a Practice Directions and relevant guidance on repeat victimisation in their own right.
- 1.4 The PD is intentionally written to provide a basic framework that is flexible and designed to allow the development and establishment of local working practices to meet specific local priorities. These may well be different across the force, but overall it is necessary to provide a force level standard to repeat victims that is justifiable. In general terms a Repeat Victim will be considered a victim/ location that are subject to a further similar crime within a rolling 12 month period.
- 1.5 The legal basis for this PD are the provisions of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and our Police Act 1997 responsibilities to prevent and detect crime.

2. AUTHORITY LEVELS

- 2.1 This practice direction may not be amended without the authority of the Detective Chief Superintendent, Head of Crime.
- 2.2 The Divisional Commander or nominated Deputy within each division will determine the crimes to be addressed by these procedures.
- 2.3 Authority to vary the provisions in individual cases depending on the needs of the victim can be authorised by the Divisional Commander or his nominated Deputy

3. RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1 The Divisional Commander or nominated Deputy will determine the process and action required to identify repeat victims and determine the subsequent action required in their locality. They will ensure appropriate

auditable record keeping in respect of decision making and actions taken, the usual location for this will be the relevant crime records.

- 3.2 Divisional Superintendent (Operations) or Detective Superintendent, as determined by the Divisional Commander, will identify the officer responsible for carrying out the action(s) required in this Practice Direction.
- 3.3 Questioning the victim is the responsibility of any officer/ member of staff taking a complaint of a relevant crime to establish whether the victim has previously been subject to a similar offence during the previous twelve month period. This can be achieved by seeking information from either the victim themselves or by interrogating relevant computer systems. The Customer Service Crime Centre Advisor can play a key role in this identification process.

4. PROCESS.

- 4.1 The process and actions required to deliver an enhanced level of service to those victims and crimes prioritised by the division is to be determined by local senior management however the following points should be included in any agreed process.

4.2 Point of Identification.

- 4.2.1 Determine at what point in the crime recording/investigative process is the repeat victim to be identified, options include; Crime Management Unit, Divisional Intelligence Bureau or other points within the process determined at a divisional level. The Customer Service Crime Centre Advisor has a key role to play in facilitating this identification as improvements to CIS 4 functionality will in certain circumstances allow identification at the point of reporting although this will still require a divisional response to allow local processes to be initiated.

4.3 Divisional Criteria.

- 4.3.1 Having agreed the point at which the repeat victim is to be identified what criteria is to be used to identify crime/victim type to be included in the process. It is assumed at a force level that repeat dwelling burglary victims will always be included in the process. Particularly vulnerable victims and targets that will attract significant media attention should also be considered for inclusion within the process. However it will be for the division to identify the priority crime or incidents that it wishes to be identified for an enhanced level of service.

4.4 The Divisional Process

- 4.4.1 Following the identification of a repeat victim that meets the divisional criteria the process that is to follow must be determined and articulated. Consideration should be given to having a different process for differing criteria; repeat dwelling burglary may be forwarded to the Daily Management Meeting; whilst Harassment/Anti Social Behaviour may be sent to the Neighbourhood Policing Team, other crime types may involve

partner agencies, a key feature at this point is that the process should be auditable. It is unhelpful for referrals to be simply noted, if a crime/incident type is of sufficient importance to be included in the divisional criteria it warrants a more complete response on the action taken by the receiving team or agency.

4.4.2 The aim of any process should be to provide a level of service that supports victims and also assists in reducing/ preventing further crimes being committed. This process will include methods of communicating a need for action to the most appropriate action point in a Division and then to dictate the level of action that might be required.

5. BURGLARY

5.1 Dwelling Burglary in most cases has a high impact on the victims feeling of safety and research indicates that they are often subjected to repeat offences. It is for this reason that this crime type has been singled out for specific mention. A graded response should be undertaken in respect of repeat burglary of a dwelling, within the specified time period, this could be as follows;

- 1st offence - Bronze
- 2nd offence - Silver
- 3rd or subsequent offence - Gold

5.2 Whilst the level of action remains a local issue the below should be considered;

5.3 Bronze Response

5.3.1 First time victims of burglary (or attempt) will receive the following level of response as a minimum:

- Police response and investigation.
- Consider the attendance of a Scenes of Crime Officer.
- An information pack containing:-
- A tactful letter explaining that research indicates the possibility of another offence is greater following the initial offence.
- Advice to quickly repair damage at the point of entry.
- Advice on home security to reduce the risk of a second offence.
- A self-survey form.
- Provision of a ultra-violet market pen and Home Office window stickers.

5.9 Silver Response

5.9.1 When a second burglary (or attempt) offence occurs within a rolling twelve month period of the initial offence victims will receive:

- A visit by an officer trained in crime prevention, reinforcing previous advice including a tactful reminder that the risk of a further offence has probably increased.

- Advice on upgrading security including gating alleyways, fitting alarm systems, increased lighting and use of mock occupancy devices.
- Use of 'Cocoon Watch' (asking neighbours to be extra vigilant to victim's premises). It is usual to seek agreement of the victim prior to this being done.
- Use of police visits.
- Consider liaison with or the establishment of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes

5.10 Gold Response

5.10.1 Premises that are subject to a burglary (or attempt) for the third or more times will have consideration given to:

- The fitting temporarily of a Home Office alarm or closed circuit television/video equipment.
- Increased visible police patrols.
- Visits from patrolling officers.

5.10.2 This PD acknowledges that Divisions may adopt various approaches to the crime prevention aspect of repeat victimisation involving for example the use of Local Partnerships, the use of other forms of technology and so on. The above levels of service are intended as an indication of actions that should be considered.

6. HATE INCIDENTS/ DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/ SEXUAL OFFENCES

6.1 Whilst the principles contained within this general practice direction still apply and should be seen as a minimum standard the nature of these crime types on occasions warrants a more specialist response. Comprehensive guidance can be found within the relevant practice directions.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT

7.1 Any action taken in respect of this PD and in particular the Gold, Silver and Bronze response process will be tailored to the needs of the victims and will consider issues relation to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and any disability.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

8.1 This PD has been produced in consideration of the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Any action taken will be in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder and crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights or freedoms of others.

8.2 Any action taken will be necessary, proportionate and justifiable with regards the issue to be addressed. In addition the action taken should be the least intrusive option available to address a particular problem.

8.3 The PD is suitable for general publication.

8.4 This PD will be subject to review every three years or sooner in the case of a change in legislation or policy.

8.5 Any action taken under the provisions of this PD could be subject to scrutiny in Criminal or Civil Court. The Police Complaints procedure is available to anyone aggrieved by any action taken by the Police.

9. RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

9.1 The content of this PD has been considered under the provisions of the Race equality scheme, as dictated by the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended), and a consultation process with the Humberside Police Independent Advisory Group has been undertaken.

10. RACE RELATIONS AMENDMENTS ACT (2000)

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken covering Diversity, Race, Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Beliefs and Age.

11. DATE OF PUBLICATION

14.5.03

Re write 20.1.06

Re write 12.2.07

Re write 10.3.08

12. OTHER REFERENCES

12.1 Biting Back: Tackling Repeat Burglary (Police Research Group, Crime Detection and Prevention Series Paper 58).

12.2 Osman Warning PD