

***'THE POLICE RESPONSE TO BURGLARY, ROBBERY AND OTHER ACQUISITIVE CRIME –
FINDING TIME FOR CRIME'* PUBLISHED BY HMICFRS ON 11TH AUGUST 2022
AVON & SOMERSET PCC REPOSE DATED 6TH OCTOBER 2022**

Neighbourhood crime (or serious acquisitive crime) is defined as residential burglary, personal robbery, theft from the person and theft of or from vehicles. Neighbourhood crime is a national policing priority and is also an area of focus within my Police and Crime Plan.

In Avon and Somerset these crimes account for 11% of all recorded crime. These crimes happen in all areas, both urban and rural, and can have a very serious impact on victims, aside from the financial loss. My main aim is to prevent these types of crime happening in the first place. But when they do happen, I want the police to provide the best response possible, which is about supporting the victim and conducting a thorough investigation.

This report contains two specific recommendations for local police forces set out below.

Recommendation 1

By March 2023, forces should make sure their crime scene management practices adhere to the authorised professional practice on managing investigations for SAC or provide a rationale for deviating from it. They should also include:

- giving victims timely and appropriate advice during their initial call; and
- applying a risk assessment process such as THRIVE, clearly recording it, and flagging those re-victimised for further support.

Recommendation 2

By March 2023, all forces should ensure SAC investigations are subject to effective supervision and direction. This should focus on:

- making sure supervisors have the capability and capacity to meaningfully supervise investigations;
- making sure investigations meet the necessary standard and achieve suitable outcomes that consider the voice or opinion of victims;
- applying investigative outcome codes appropriately; and
- complying with the Victims' Code and recording evidence of compliance

In response to the recommendations from this report, I can confirm the following.

Recommendation 1

Avon and Somerset Police already follow the Approved Professional Practice (APP) – set by the College of Policing (CoP) – in relation to crime scene management. Student police officers are taught crime scene management (CSM) as part of their curriculum and there is an annual quality assurance to confirm this is compliant with the CoP curriculum.

During the initial call from a victim, call handlers use a call script designed to ask questions that will provide Crime Scene Investigators with the information they need to assess CSM opportunities or whether the victim requires direct contact from the CSI. In addition, some crimes will automatically be flagged for CSI review.

The call scripts (mentioned above) already incorporate the THRIVE risk assessment and identifies the investigatory lines of enquiry available from the initial call. This includes questions to find out if a victim is a repeat victim, which is then recorded on the system and this will also involve a referral to the [Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit](#).

Recommendation 2

Avon and Somerset Police have a specialist team (called Operation Remedy) which have had burglary as a focus of their work for a number of years. This allows for the cultivation and sharing of best practice within this team. Burglary detection rates have improved since this team have been operating. With the increasing number of officers going into Op Remedy the plan is to create Neighbourhood Crime Focus Teams. A Detective Inspector will take lead responsibility for neighbourhood crimes.

However, the Constabulary have recognised the need to improve their investigations across the board, including neighbourhood crimes. To help address this issue the Constabulary have recently set up an Investigative Standards Group which brings together colleagues from different teams to find ways of improving outcomes. One of the recent developments has been the introduction of a new supervisor review template. The early indication, from audits, is that this template is helping to improve the standard of reviews and enabling better direction of investigations.

In the last year the Constabulary have had a focus on improving crime data integrity including the recording of outcomes. This group developed and delivered regular training on these issues. The Constabulary also have an Outcomes Review Team which regularly check and audit the outcomes applied; correcting them and providing feedback to officers and staff where required.

Compliance with the Victims' Code is, in part, recorded on the crime recording system as part of the investigation. This recording is then measured and visualised through Qlik software. This makes the data available to the investigators and supervisors and provides prompts to complete certain tasks as set out in the code. The crime reviews conducted by supervisors are also visualised through Qlik.

However, it is acknowledged that the data available through Qlik does not present a full picture of compliance and more detailed audits are required to understand this. These audits highlight areas for improvement which will be shared with officers and staff.

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