



**Lancashire  
Constabulary**

police and communities together

**REPORT TO: STRATEGIC SCRUTINY MEETING**

**DATE: 13 March 2014**

**AGENDA ITEM: 2a Constabulary Performance**

**SUBJECT: Burglary & Robbery – High Impact Acquisitive Crime**

## **BURGLARY**

Operation Julius is Lancashire Constabulary's response to dealing with Burglary offences, with a focus on burglary dwelling but also encompassing other similar victim impact crime types.

### **Operation Julius Background**

Burglary dwelling offences have a significant impact on victims and affects confidence in policing across our communities. They remain iconic and it is important we continue to protect people from harm but also to ensure our communities feel safe, confident and reassured.

High Impact Acquisitive Crime remains a priority for the Constabulary and Operation Julius 2013 looked to build on the significant reductions seen over the last 35 years whilst impacting on reducing the number of offences, focusing on bringing offenders to justice and increasing confidence in Lancashire Constabulary.

In August 2013, ACC Bates reviewed previous operations and asked for an approach to be adopted which was sustainable and would form the Constabulary's continued response to burglary offences. Superintendent Damian Darcy and T/Chief Inspector Derry Crokken were identified as the operational and BCU leads for this work.

Governance was provided through a Gold Group chaired by ACC Bates and with the operational working title of 'Operation Julius.' This was a well-known brand with previous initiatives using the same working title, but would have a different feel and approach and with different defined outcomes from previous initiatives. The group included Single Points of Contact from each of the BCU's, departments and thematic leads.

Analysis of these crime types over previous years identified a seasonal increase in reports between October and December. This had an additional impact on victims with offences occurring at a particularly significant time of year in the lead up to the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

The first two Quarters of 2013 had seen increases in recorded Burglary Dwelling offences of 11.0% and 12.7% respectively. The aim of Operation Julius was to develop a sustainable and proportionate response to reports of Burglary with a focus on Burglary Dwelling offences. With the anticipated seasonal increases seen over previous years during Quarter 3, one aim was to coordinate activity across the Constabulary to reduce the increases which had been seen in the preceding six months.

The Gold Group would provide a consistency of approach across all the BCU's. The aim at the end of the operation would be to identify and share emerging best practice across the Constabulary which can then serve as the overarching response to Burglary offences. This would form a template of best practice for BCU's to use as a sustainable approach to these crime types.

### **Operation Julius Value Measures**

The Gold objectives of Operation Julius 2013 were: -

1. To reduce the number of burglary dwelling offences
2. To maximise detections for burglary dwellings
3. To maximise crime prevention opportunities for burglary dwelling
4. To improve confidence in policing across Lancashire by providing a quality service

Operation Julius aimed at coordinating activities across the Constabulary involving different teams, departments and partner agencies. It focused on those offenders who are most prolific and aimed to reduce the number of burglary offences in the run up to Christmas 2013.

Previous Operation Julius initiatives have seen intensive weekly themed activities and days of action. However, it was recognised this type and level of activity cannot be consistently sustained over a 3 month period.

Day to day activity of targeting, the catch and convict of offenders and crime prevention continued as daily business. Operation Julius 2013 provided additional impetus through specific themed months to drive activity and look at achieving the overall aims.

These themed months will focus on Pursue-Prosecute-Prevent.

- **October Pursue** – offenders through effective targeting and intervention strategies
- **November Prosecute** – ensuring offenders are brought to justice
- **December Prevent** – communities becoming the victim of crime

Previous Operation Julius initiatives had a clear focus on traditional performance targets. Operation Julius 2013 did not have this narrow focus on those traditional outcomes of reductions and detections based upon measuring activity over a set period of time. Instead it contained a golden thread having a clear focus on delivering Quality. It will look to focus on the internal processes designed to maintain a high quality of service to victims: -

- Quality of our response to reports of burglary

- Quality of service provided to victims from initial call through to keeping victims informed
- Quality of the investigation leading to successful positive outcomes
- Quality of the intelligence and information leading to positive disruption of offenders
- Quality of the interaction between the police and communities through effective use of media and communication outlets
- Quality of the advice and support given to communities to prevent them becoming targeted as a victim of crime
- Quality of the work done to divert offenders away from committing crime

By focussing on getting it right first time, in providing a quality service to our victims and communities, in developing successful interactions and outcomes for offenders, Operation Julius saw success in the traditional measures of performance around reductions and detections.

*'Instead of this being an operation defined and led by outcomes, it will be an operation defined and driven by the quality of what we do.'*

Activities included Days of Action to arrest and detect offences, a focus on target hardening to prevent crimes and a consistent theme of offender targeting with a golden thread of quality underpinning the whole operation. It was led in each BCU by a Chief Inspector with overall coordination of the operation by Pennine Division.

### **Operation Julius Actions**

The focus of Operation Julius was directed towards the three themed months with the quality of actions and interactions defining what were done.

#### **October - Pursue**

##### **Focus on the launch of Operation Julius 2013 and a theme of targeting of offenders.**

The theme of first month was 'Pursue' with the focus on working with known offenders through effective intervention strategies involving a combination of Integrated Offender Management activity and offender targeting. This involved several different internal departments and external partner agencies such as the Probation Service, Mental Health, Local Community Safety Partnerships and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector agencies. This will identify offenders who are failing to engage and will be used to drive activity in November which will focus on Prosecute - catch and convict.

#### **November - Prosecute**

##### **Focus on the targeting of offenders identified as the most prolific and problematic.**

This focused on the arrest of offenders involving Days of Action including strike days and the 'lock down' of problem areas involving resources from across the Constabulary using a range of tactics against identified target offenders and areas. This activity will support the last month which will have a theme of Prevent activity. Each BCU was given support from H Division and were allocated two days in each month which acted as a focus for this targeted activity.

#### **December - Prevent**

##### **Focus on Crime Prevention Activity in run-up to Christmas**

This provided an opportunity to focus on crime prevention. The drive during December saw advice provided to communities during the weeks leading up to Christmas to prevent them becoming a victim of crime. The aim was to increase the knowledge and awareness of people in our communities, with particular focus on our burglary dwelling hotspot areas.

The focus was on getting people to consider the safety and security of their premises and on schemes to record and mark property accurately.

### Operation Julius Outcomes

Success of the operation was not defined solely by reductions or detections from recorded crimes. A focus of Operation Julius was to ensure that officers and staff took an approach which put the victim at the centre of everything we do. To make sure interactions with communities were positive and that officers and staff focused on ensuring their actions and behaviour met with the need to provide a high quality of service to the public of Lancashire.

Each BCU was left to decide how they would implement the tactical parts of the operation. However, each BCU was asked to consider how they would ensure their focus on internal processes and on reward and recognition of good work became the norm and formed part of a cultural shift in how we responded to offences of burglary and which would form part of a new approach.

This is more difficult to measure with traditional performance indicators, but BCU's were asked to include examples of when staff were recognised for the quality of what they did; that external measures of success looked at how satisfied victims were with our service; and examples of when victims expressed their gratitude in how officers and staff dealt with them.

### Recorded Crime

Below are two tables which provide detail of traditional measures of performance. This first table shows the increase in recorded crime for All Burglary compared to the previous year. Operation Julius focused on Quarter 3 (October – December). It shows a reversal of the increases that had been seen in the first two quarters of 2013.

Percentage Changes - Individual Quarters				% Change YTD
Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	
+ 2.6%	+ 7.8%	- 2.5%		+ 2.5%
3,019	3,151	3,065		

This table shows the same for the number of recorded Burglary Dwelling offences. Again, it shows the same pattern of reversal and a very small decrease in recorded offences.

Percentage Changes - Individual Quarters				% Change YTD
Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	
+ 11.0%	+ 12.7%	- 0.3%		+ 7.5%
1,104	1,161	1,149		

The table below shows the last eleven months recorded crimes for Burglary Dwelling offences across Lancashire. What can be seen from the last six months is that recorded crime has remained remarkably static and ranged between 378 offences in February 2014 to 392 offences in January 2014. Operation Julius began in October 2013 and has been part of the reason for this continual performance since that date.

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
340	370	394	415	365	381	381	389	379	392	378

This static recording is unusual when compared with other years where there has been a much broader and less consistent range of recording. For example, December 2011 saw 486 recorded crimes and February 2012 saw 299 recorded crimes, a difference of 187 crimes.

### Recorded Outcomes

The Constabulary has seen a decrease in the number of recorded outcomes for victims throughout 2013 than has been previously seen from preceding years.

Following definitive guidance provided by the Sentencing Council which came into effect on 11th June 2012 entitled 'Offences Taken into Consideration and Totality Definitive Guideline' there has been a shift in the stance taken by defence lawyers in giving advice to their clients who are no longer willing to engage in having offences Taken into Consideration (TIC). The short summary covered in the general principles of the report states: -

*When sentencing an offender who requests offences to be taken into consideration (TIC's), courts should pass a total sentence which reflects all the offending behaviour.*

This means that an offender will be sentenced not only for the offence for which they have entered a guilty plea, but '*..the sentence imposed on an offender should.....be increased to reflect the fact that other offences have been taken into account.*' Any consideration of reducing a sentence based upon an early guilty plea or an indication an offender has shown genuine remorse will apply to the totality of the sentence. This may result in reducing the sentence, but is no change to previous guidelines. The difference here is the sentence for an offender will begin at an increased starting point, which would be greater than if no TIC's were admitted.

This has had the effect of reducing the number of TIC's and most notably with burglary offences. To compare April 2012-February 2013 with April 2013-February 2014 there has been a reduction in the number of TIC's. The table below highlights the outcome rates for All Crime and Burglary Dwelling comparing the same time period in 2012/13 with 2013/14.

	April 2012-Feb 2013	April 2013-Feb 2014
<b>All Crime Outcomes</b>	33,192	31,289
<b>TIC's</b>	2,417	994
<b>SDR</b>	35.7%	29.4%
<b>All Outcomes</b>	39.0%	35.8%
<b>Burglary Dwelling</b>		
<b>BIAD Outcome</b>	1,189	985
<b>TIC's</b>	362	181
<b>SDR</b>	30.6%	23.4%
<b>All Outcomes</b>	30.7%	23.6%

- TIC's as a total of all outcomes for All Crime has reduced from 2,417 to 994. This reduction of 1,423 TIC's or 58.9%.
- In 2012/13, TIC's made up 7.3% of All Crime outcomes. This has reduced to 3.2% in 2013/14 and contributes to the decrease in all outcomes compared to last year.
- For Burglary Dwelling, the number has reduced from 362 to 181 TIC's which is a 50.0% decrease.
- In 2012/13, TIC's made up 30.4% of all Burglary Dwelling outcomes. This has reduced to 18.4% and is the major factor why all outcomes have reduced in 2013/14

because fewer of the all outcomes are made up of cautions, RJ's, Police Resolution, Triage etc.

One of the outcomes considered from the operation is to review investigations and consider other alternative methods to bridge the gap between offending behaviours and successful positive outcomes for victims. The focus was clearly on victim outcome and satisfaction and three conspiracy investigations were presented to CPS for consideration of preferring charges. These were Operation Intrepid at Preston, Operation Safari at Blackburn and Operation Aequitas at Burnley.

Discussions have been held both locally and with the head of CPS for Lancashire, Mr John Dilworth, about ensuring a consistency of approach in these circumstances. A paper was presented at the Tactical Tasking Coordination Group in January 2014 which sets out the approach to take when considering conducting an investigation into offences of conspiracy to commit a criminal act, with a particular focus in learning the lessons from the three reviews and investigations that had already been conducted.

## **Case Studies**

### **Case One**

In September and into October 2013, a series of burglaries (both dwelling and shop premises) and vehicle crime had taken place in the usually quiet outlying town of Barnoldswick on the Yorkshire border. This had a devastating impact on the mainly independent shop owners and put their livelihood at risk. A breakthrough occurred when items stolen during the offences began to appear on E-Bay. The subsequent investigation led to several arrests and the recovery of a large value of the property which had been stolen. Four people have since been charged with conspiracy to commit burglary and are awaiting trial. This case study was subject of a recent documentary filmed by the BBC and called 'Break In Britain'. The first episode is due to be aired in April and it focuses on this investigation. Of significance is the enormous community Neighbourhood Policing involvement in the investigation and follow-up. They have since secured shop radios for local business premises and state-of-the-art 'SelectaDNA' crime prevention tool which covers an offender with a unique invisible coating of a solution and can be traced back to a specific location.

### **Case Two**

In October 2013, a burglary occurred at an address in Burnley. Whilst they were away on holiday the family were victim of a burglary where the ashes of their deceased grandfather were stolen. This had a significant impact on the victim and her family. A press release resulted in an anonymous telephone call to the police which named the offender. He was quickly arrested on the same day as the information was provided. He admitted the burglary and showed genuine remorse for stealing the ashes stating he did not realise what he had done. Unfortunately, he had already disposed of the urn containing the ashes and the dustbins had already been emptied. Officers enquired if it would be possible to locate them at the waste disposal site, but were told this was too dangerous and difficult to do. The victim and her family were kept informed throughout the investigation and despite not having the safe return of their grandfather's ashes, they wrote a heartfelt letter of thanks and appreciation to the officers in the case. The offender pleaded guilty and received a term of imprisonment. He also wrote a letter apologising to his victims for what he had done.

### **Case Three**

At the end of British Summer Time and in the lead up to winter, we see darker nights which have previously led to an increase in crime as offenders feel more confident to commit crime during the hours of darkness. Information from recorded crimes shows that in around 30% of all burglary dwelling offences, the attacked premises were insecure. To address this, Southern Division embarked on a campaign to raise awareness that included visiting over 1,500 addresses and providing simple security advice around keeping doors and windows locked to prevent them becoming a target. This was combined with a media and leaflet campaign raising awareness of the issue of darker nights and insecure premises. The campaign was done with a joint effort from NHP teams, Special Constables and Community Volunteers and received repeated positive feedback from the community.

### **Case Four**

A number of thefts have taken place across the country where high value bicycle are stolen. Some of these bicycles can cost upwards of £5,000 and the impact on victims is significant. It was apparent that it can be extremely difficult to identify a stolen bicycle without a national property marking scheme. Preston worked with a national company and introduced a scheme where any bicycle can be registered with them for free, making it easier to reunite a recovered bicycle with an owner. This was done through a successful media campaign but was also introduced across Lancashire as part of the aim to prevent people becoming a victim of crime by properly marking their property. Bicycle retailers were encouraged to register bicycles which had been bought for Christmas at the point of sale to ensure this was done immediately a new owner was identified. This was a good example of the preventative work done across the Constabulary following identification of the scheme at an Operation Julius Gold meeting.

## **ROBBERY**

Whilst the numbers involved in the increase are comparatively small (0.30 offences per day across the county), the impact on victims, and businesses, is not underestimated. The Constabulary approach to robbery offences is best demonstrated through case studies which show the significance of the response, and the variety of approaches taken, including problem solving, and prevention.

### **Case Study One – Force threat re Cash & Valuables in Transit (CViT)**

**REDACTED**

### **Case Study Two – Pennine mobile phone robberies**

In the early part of September 2013, the Daneshouse, Stoneyholme, Bank Hall, and Briercliffe Road areas of Burnley saw a rise in reported robberies, in which lone and vulnerable victims were targeted for their personal belongings, including mobile phones. Between September and November 2013, there was a series of 14 recorded robberies in this area. To put that into context, it doubled the number of robbery crimes in the whole of the division during that period.

### **Response**

A Robbery Action Plan was put in place, with a coordinated approach involving different internal departments and external agencies. One concern of the division was the area where the offences were taking place had two large College communities, where new students from across the area, and the country, had started in September. Students from the College had previously been victims of robbery in the same area, including one in March 2013, when the victim sustained injuries following a prolonged attack.

#### **Action Taken:**

- A Robbery Profile was raised on the Sleuth tasking page for Burnley identifying areas of risk, and potential suspects.
- Individuals identified as presenting a serious risk were raised as 'Target Nominals' and were visited on a daily basis by Proactive, Neighbourhood and Immediate Response Officers to prevent their activities from continuing.
- All offences were investigated by experienced detectives, with overall coordination of the investigation by a Detective Inspector.
- Increased patrols in the area. A mixture of plain clothed, uniform, NHP and H Division resources were utilised at key times, and in identified hot spot areas, to prevent further offences taking place.
- Liaison with the Colleges and with students to raise awareness of this issue and to give crime prevention safety advice.
- Involvement of the local Community Safety Partnership and use of their mobile CCTV facility in the area to act as a deterrent to prevent further offences taking place.

- Involvement of the local community councillors and leaders. It was suspected the offenders were from the local community, and it was shown they were indiscriminate in choosing their victims, with victims coming from a range of ages and cultural backgrounds.

## **Outcome**

The result was a cessation of recorded personal robberies in that area. Three offenders have been arrested and two separate charges have been obtained for these offences. The most notable was a 16 year old local male and ring leader of a group of young men who were suspected of being responsible for this spate of personal robberies (this male is still awaiting trial).

The results of investigations and arrests were properly communicated to the community who have shown their on-going support for police action taken in respect of the individuals who have been arrested.

This has resulted in improved working relationships with local colleges and a better knowledge and awareness from the community of this type of offending within their area.

## **Case Study Three – Northern CViT**

**REDACTED**