

Nottingham Civic Exchange



Future of supported housing inquiry

The Work & Pensions and Communities & Local Government Committees join inquiry

December 2016 – May 2017

Written Evidence submitted by Nottingham Trent University, Quantitative and Spatial Criminology Research Group – Professor Andromachi Tseloni

1. Executive Summary

- Analysis of UK Crime Survey Data highlights that supported housing tenants may suffer increased crime risks
- Provision for reducing this risk should be considered within the inquiry and specific focus should be made for a number of identified groups
- Analysis should be undertaken to ensure low value areas are not financially penalised to reduce the crime risk to tenants

2. [Professor Andromachi Tseloni](#)

Professor Tseloni is Professor of Quantitative Criminology with expertise in victimisation theory, applied social statistics and econometrics. Her work revolves around five broad themes: criminal victimisation inequalities, the crime drop, crime perceptions' social capital and cross-national comparisons.

Her current role involves leading the Quantitative and Spatial Criminology Research Group; supporting research – related activities in the Division and the School and working on research projects informing crime prevention and community policing.

3. Nottingham Trent University: [Social Science Department](#)

The School of Social Sciences is a nationally and internationally recognised centre for the study of engaged social science. We offer a wide range of courses, which address the key social issues of today.

4. Submission

4.1. We are submitting evidence to the inquiry into supported housing funding reform because our research highlights that certain types of population groups and area types at most risk of burglary and with the least presence of security devices. The following population groups are consistently over time, and especially after the burglary fall, at a greater risk of burglary and have lower levels of effective security than others:

- Social or private renters
- One or three or more adult households, those with children or Lone parents
- Households of Asian (Indian-sub-continent), Chinese or other origin
- Households on low (<£10,000) or non-reported annual household income
- Households without a car
- Households living in deprived areas

4.2. Our view is that any consideration on supported housing funding reform should be aware of these facts and ensure that crime prevention initiatives are recommended to support selected households and communities to improve their burglary security.

4.3. When considering finance options for supported housing across the UK, especially where low value areas are concerned requires particular attention to ensure these groups do not suffer unduly from criminal activity, which would have a consequential effect on services.

4.4. Additional research (Tseloni et al. 2014; Tilley et al. 2015)ⁱ from the UK's Crime Survey Data looked specifically at the impact of individual and combinations of burglary hardening devices from 1998 to present day. This work found that the combination of external and internal lights, window and door locks (WIDE) provides the cheapest and safest target hardening option against burglary. The effectiveness of the security devices was gauged via the Security Impact Assessment Tool (SIAT), a new methodology developed in an earlier ESRC-funded project. The research also highlighted the statistical ineffectiveness of CCTV and Burglar Alarms on burglary rates.

4.5. The findings of this research were used for a target hardening pilot project in Nottingham, a demonstration project to implement and test the effectiveness of the window and door locks, internal and external lights (WIDE) security combination recommended by the research as the most effective and 'best value' combination.

4.6. The pilot was led by the Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership (NCDP) involving local police and housing services. Drawing on the research's findings and the theory of repeat and near repeat victimisation, the pilot project undertook a randomised experiment across four appropriately selected areas of Nottingham. The NCDP offered free of charge WIDE security upgrades to the burgled properties as well as up to 20 houses surrounding the targeted property to the side, front and back in the test areas. After an initial visit and assessment by the Crime Prevention Team the work was undertaken by the city council's ALMO housing provider, Nottingham City Homes, using Secured By Design windows, doors, and external solar-powered lights. Burglary victims in the control area receive a similar visit and assessment from the crime prevention team, but then receive only advice. In order to maintain the integrity of the design there was no media coverage of the pilot.

4.7. Due to this pilot the team:

- Provided robust and tested physical security to past areas of repeat burglary;
- Replaced poor windows and doors to homes that either had been targeted or were a potential one;
- Replaced poor windows for home owners who couldn't afford to replace windows that could not lock or close properly; and
- Reduced the fear of crime and enhanced public reassurance.

4.8. As a result of the Nottingham target hardening pilot the following societal and economic impacts were generated:

- The University of Nottingham now requires the privately rented student accommodation to be WIDE secured;
- The Nottinghamshire Police Force and the Nottingham City Council launched a burglary target hardening campaign, via the Nottingham City Transport Bus Advertising (on certain routes) the project's finding that door and window locks, external and internal lights offer the most efficient protection against burglars. Neighbouring cities, for example Leicester, have undertaken the same initiative
- The Nottingham City Council established minimum-security standards requirements for rented property across the city.

As a result domestic burglary is the second fastest falling crime type in the city at a period of stable burglary rates nationally and Nottingham has dropped six places for Serious Acquisitive Crime (predominately domestic burglary) across the Most Similar Familyⁱⁱ

4.9. We believe this standard is rolled out for all supported housing across the UK and provision within the funding system should be made to ensure this is acted on. We are concerned that a varied rate of the LHA cap may adversely affect tenants and providers in low-value parts of the country where funding is not adequate to provide secure and proven security measures for supported housing.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1. Detailed analysis of supported housing tenants and sub groups should be undertaken and mapped against risk factors for differing crime types (for example burglary, theft and criminal damage) to support local allocations and also provide Local Authorities with the best information to make informed choices about funding supported housing provision in their areas.
 - 5.2. The reform of supported housing funding must take into account these potential risk factors and offer advice to Local Authorities so that they adequately manage the risk for high-risk groups.
 - 5.3. Local authorities should be compelled to identify and assess the crime risk for supported housing tenants and make cost effective improvements to their housing provision that mitigates such risk.
 - 5.4. WIDE household security measures should be recommended as the minimum standard for all supported housing developments.
 - 5.5. Provision for retrofitting WIDE security measures should be prioritised and included in standards as has been adopted by Nottingham City Council
 - 5.6. This research highlights a pressing need to ensure all housing stock current and in development is fitted with adequate security provision using the WIDE principles laid out in this research ([WIDE principles](#))
6. Whilst our research does not look directly to the distinct systematic requirements of a reformed Local Housing Allowance system we ask that the increased crime risk for some groups should be taken into account when developing new finance models to ensure those with an increased risk factors of burglary/victimisation are not unduly punished. These groups include, for example, those who have experienced victimisation in the last year, households with three or more cars, lone parents, inner city and urban areas residents, and social renters, as well as areas with high number of cars per household in the area, high percentage of 5-15 years old, population density, and deprivation (Osborn and Tseloni 1998; Tseloni 2006; 2014; Tseloni and Thompson 2015)ⁱⁱⁱ.

ⁱ Tseloni, A., Thompson, R., Grove, L., Tilley, N. and Farrell, G. (2014) The effectiveness of burglary security devices. *Security Journal*. Open Access: <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/sj/journal/vaop/ncurrent/abs/sj201430a.html>

Tilley, N., Thompson, R., Farrell, G., Grove, L. and Tseloni, A. (2015) Do burglar alarms increase burglary risk? A counter-intuitive finding and possible explanations. *Crime Prevention and Community Safety: An International Journal*, 17(1), 1-19. Open Access: <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/cpcs/journal/v17/n1/index.html>

ⁱⁱ Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership (2015) *Strategic Assessment 2015/16*.

ⁱⁱⁱ Osborn, D.R. and Tseloni, A. (1998) The distribution of household property crimes. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 14, 307-330.

Tseloni, A. (2006) Multilevel modelling of the number of property crimes: Household and area effects. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series A-Statistics in Society*, 169, Part 2, 205-233.

Tseloni, A. (2014) Understanding Victimization Frequency. Chapter 127. In *Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice (ECCJ)*, Gerben Bruinsma and David Weisburd (Editors in Chief). New York: Springer-Verlag: 5370-5382.

Tseloni, A. and Thompson, R. (2015) Securing the premises. *Significance* London: The Royal Statistical Society, 12(1), 32-35. Open Access: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1740-9713.2015.00800.x/pdf>