

RISK RESEARCH

Should you accept 40% more risk in social housing?



Social renting households experience the highest levels of crime victimisation by housing tenure types according to our research based on national crime statistics from the Crime Survey for England and Wales. At a period of sustained reduction in crime it is imperative to recognise and seek solutions for groups who have not benefited from this drop.

Nottingham Trent University's Quantitative and Spatial Criminology (QSC) Research Group has done in-depth research in this area. This article will highlight research and recommendations related to social renters with a particular focus on:

- Household crime
- Personal crime
- Witnessing or experiencing ASB

HOUSEHOLD CRIME

Extensive analysis of various years of crime survey data (from the 1990s through to 2014) undertaken by the first author highlights that social renters experienced between double and 10 times the national average household crimes depending on their area of residence and year of victimisation. Specifically in relation to owner occupiers social renters on average suffer:

- 70% more household thefts
- 40% more criminal damage
- 50% more burglaries (including attempts)
- Roughly 40% more burglaries and household thefts.

Crucially, social renters' relative burglary risk has tripled compared to owner occupiers over the period of the crime drop.



Window locks



Internal lights



Door double or dead locks



External lights

Recommendations

The QSC's research and testing in Nottingham shows that deploying the WIDE combination of household security has the biggest impact. WIDE stands for Windows that lock with a key, Internal lights on timer, Door double or dead locks, and External lights on a sensor. Homes in England and Wales with this combination are 49 times safer from burglary with entry than those without any security devices. The moderate cost of this combination makes it an attractive prevention tool that can be widely deployed. Further research shows it is also the most cost effective and environmentally-friendly system of burglary prevention. By contrast alarms on average moderately increase the risk of burglary. We recommend that social renter providers deploy the WIDE principles across their housing stock, and be prudent on relying on burglar alarms to prevent burglaries.



PERSONAL CRIME

Social renters experience 40% more personal crimes within a 15 minute walk from home than owner occupiers regardless of where their neighbourhood is situated. Specifically in relation to owner occupiers social renters on average suffer:

- An increased number of thefts from person and robberies
- 85% higher odds of assault in the night-time economy
- Nearly double number of violence incidents perpetrated by acquaintances, that is people they know just to speak to casually or just by sight; neighbours; work colleagues; clients and members of public contacted through work; friends and acquaintances; or local children.

Also social renters' relative risk of violence by acquaintances has moderately increased compared to owner occupiers over the period of the crime drop.

Recommendations

This research highlights the increased risks faced by social renters. The QSC research has informed engagement and awareness campaigns and we are happy to talk further about this work. Our research has nudged the Office for National Statistics to provide the online individual victimisation predictor tool. We can help you understand your area risk profile and target messaging to support clients. These research findings could be used to lobby government and local policy makers to ensure resources are allocated to this pressing issue.

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Antisocial behaviour is a term that includes a wide and diverse mix of 'social disorders or incivilities' which can range from harassment and intimidating behaviour to dangerous or inconsiderate vehicle driving. The Crime Survey for England and Wales identifies 13 types of ASB whereas the police classifies reported ASB into three possible but not mutually exclusive categories: personal, nuisance and environmental. Social renters have in comparison to owner occupiers higher odds of experiencing or witnessing ASB by roughly:

- 30% with regards to criminal ASB (this includes criminal damage, graffiti, harassment, intimidation, others using and dealing drugs, dangerous dogs, and indecent sexual acts)
- 20% with regards to inconsiderate social ASB (this includes inconsiderate behaviour, loud music and noise, litter, dog fouling, nuisance neighbours, begging, vagrancy and homelessness)
- 40% with regards to vehicle-related ASB
- 20% with regards to ASB from groups hanging about.

Recommendations

These figures have highlighted a real need to further understand this issue. The QSC team is currently undertaking further research on ASB. If you wish to be kept informed of this research please contact the research lead Dr Becky Thompson at rebecca.thompson02@ntu.ac.uk

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WHAT CAN WE DO WITH THIS EVIDENCE?

We are aware that you may be dealing with these issues on a day-to-day basis and we hope our research helps as justification and evidence to stakeholders and partners. We hope it is used to help tackle traditional volume crimes and ASB by directing scarce crime prevention resources towards target hardening social renting households and their physical environments. The Quantitative and Spatial Criminology Research Group at Nottingham Trent University is continuing to develop research in this area. We are keen to work with you to make society a safer place by developing collaborative work. Further research is currently being developed on similar issues, including, for example, investigating the place and community cohesion effects on crime rates and perceived victimisation risk. If you are interested in hearing more about this research or some of our previous studies highlighted here on burglary <http://bit.ly/1XbZNB2> and violence <http://bit.ly/28Z6TNx> we welcome your contact. Our work is always undertaken with partners tackling issues outside of academia and we value the opportunity to test and develop our research in this way to ensure it has non-academic use and value.

“Our aim is to develop a better understanding of the factors that shape victimisation across different crime types and ASB in order to inform crime reduction and public reassurance initiatives.”



**Quantitative and
Spatial Criminology**
Research Group

Further academic evidence is available online, please see our pamphlet on the scale of crime and ASB victimisation on Social Renters at <http://bit.ly/2krRqhe>



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Andromachi leads the Quantitative and Spatial Criminology Research Group at NTU and for 27 years she has produced work that informs crime prevention and public reassurance initiatives. Her research (published in academic articles, book chapters and books) revolves around risk and protective factors of (repeat) crime victimisation, perceived crime risk and disorder, as well as the role of security and routine activities on the crime drop. She is currently Associate Statistical Editor of the Crime Science Journal and Executive Committee member of both the British Society of Criminology and the Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership.
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The Quantitative and Spatial Criminology Research Group at NTU has vast expertise in producing internationally leading research often in collaboration with crime prevention agencies that informs public protection policies. Our aim is to develop a better understanding of the factors that shape victimisation across different crime types and ASB in order to inform crime reduction and public reassurance initiatives. The group has extensive expertise in public protection informing research, in particular identifying population groups and areas vulnerable to crime and ASB, effective and efficient crime prevention initiatives and their evaluation.

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